Organizational Development and Leadership

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Organizational Development and Leadership

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Introduction

KEITH RUSSELL AND DENISE STEPHENS

ONE OF THE GROWING TRENDS IN LIBRARIES, especially academic research libraries, is an increase in the number of institutions that are using organizational development (OD) philosophy, processes, and tools on a regular basis. Consequently, we have developed this issue of Library Trends to provide an overview of organizational development as it is practiced in libraries, and to explore leadership development within the OD context. This issue covers a wide range of topics and draws on the literature of many disciplines. It is meant to serve as a resource for every person who believes that libraries can be improved in many ways, including how they acquire, organize, manage, and provide access to information; assess the needs of customers and provide appropriate services; manage human and financial resources; plan for the future; fulfill their mission; develop leadership skills in the staff; and initiate and manage change.

Organizational development is a long-term effort, led and supported by top management, to improve an organization’s visioning, empowerment, learning, and problem-solving processes, through an ongoing, collaborative management of organization culture—with special emphasis on the culture of intact work teams and other team configurations—using the consultant-facilitator role and the theory and technology of applied behavioral science, including action research. (French & Bell, 1999, pp. 25–26)

Much of the theory and practice of organizational development evolved during the last half of the twentieth century, primarily in business and higher education. Libraries of all types have adopted various organizational...
development practices, both in a proactive way to create healthy organizations and as a means of correcting organizational dysfunction.

Another useful definition of OD reinforces the theme of empowered people who, through learning, are the designers and implementers of systematic change:

Organization development is an educational process by which human resources are continuously identified, allocated, and expanded in ways that make these resources more available to the organization, and therefore, improve the organization’s problem-solving capabilities. The most general objective of organizational development—OD—is to develop self-renewing, self-correcting systems of people who learn to organize themselves in a variety of ways according to the nature of their tasks, and who continue to expand the choices available to the organization as it copes with the changing demands of a changing environment. OD stands for a new way of looking at the human side of organizational life. (Pfeiffer & Jones, 1971, p. 153)

Carnevale, author of a book that focuses on the use of OD in the administration and management of public institutions, adds this insight:

OD is seen as an effort to deal with or initiate change in organizational cultures . . . [involving] collaboration between a change agent and members of an organizational system . . . to expedite the diagnosis of organization problems and to encourage strategies that equip organizational members to learn how to cope with their own difficulties. OD is underscored by a belief that organizational members own their own problems and are responsible for finding solutions to them. (Carnevale, 2003, p. 1)

The articles in this issue showcase the many ways consciously chosen OD strategies can invigorate libraries. Our authors describe various OD concepts and explain how they are employed in various organizations. Where appropriate, research results supporting the use of such tools and techniques are reviewed. To a large extent, these articles provide specifics on how OD has been applied in libraries and what the results have been so far. We also have encouraged our authors to explore the potential of future applications.

Karen Holloway leads off the issue by highlighting the many reasons an increasing number of academic research libraries have created positions that focus on OD. She summarizes how libraries have employed the concepts of OD and the perceived results of focusing on the philosophy, tools, and techniques of that discipline.

Kathryn J. Deiss discusses the challenges libraries face in focusing on the needs of users and how strategy and innovation, as well as natural organizational tensions, can be employed as tools to help libraries creatively evolve and effectively engage their clientele.

Michelle L. Kaarst-Brown, Scott Nicholson, Gisela M. von Dran, and Jeffrey Stanton explore aspects of library culture and current strategies
libraries can use to capitalize on the culture and move ahead. Their article summarizes relevant literature from other disciplines and provides thought-provoking insights not normally discussed in the library literature.

Three articles in this issue apply the disciplines identified by Peter Senge as necessary for an organization to evolve into a learning organization (Senge, 1990). The case studies in these articles describe and analyze the efforts of individual libraries to plan and implement deep, long-term change: Joan Giesecke and Beth McNeil discuss the overall concept of the learning organization, which is fully consistent with what academic research libraries (and often their parent organizations—that is, universities) are all about—education and continuous learning. Their article describes the appeal of the concept and how some libraries are implementing the principles of the learning organization. Shelley Phipps focuses on how one library is creating a learning organization and, more specifically, how various organizational systems have been designed to facilitate movement toward that ideal. Betsy A. Bernfeld provides a personal narrative of how she and the public library system she directs have embraced aspects of Senge’s work, particularly the emphasis on teams.

Two of this issue’s articles discuss the importance of establishing assessment programs to enable libraries to plan and manage programs, resources, and work: Steve Hiller and James Self address the organizational challenges and methods used in implementing assessment programs that directly inform planning and decision-making. They examine the experiences of selected libraries with mature assessment programs and explain several important concepts related to data gathering and analysis. Gail Oltmanns describes how qualitative and quantitative assessment techniques can be used to develop employees and enrich their jobs and in the process improve the ways libraries meet user needs, fulfill their complex mission, and make progress toward their vision.

Pat Hawthorne focuses on how library human resources programs relate to OD and various approaches that have proven useful in improving the recruitment, training, development, utilization, and retention of a well-qualified library workforce.

Florence M. Mason and Louella V. Wetherbee review the characteristics and approaches of numerous leadership development programs the library profession employs to develop current and future leaders. They summarize aspects of such programs and comment on the evaluation of their effectiveness.

Maureen Sullivan describes appreciative inquiry, a relatively new OD approach with potentially significant applications in libraries. This process focuses a group or organization on positive aspects of its recent history and seeks to identify ways the group or organization can build upon the strengths and conditions that produced earlier successes.

Thomas L. Moore helps to define facilitative leadership, a relatively new
leadership style that engages all members of an organization more fully and leads to a more effective operation. Facilitative leadership is one of our favorite approaches to leadership. Stringer predicts that “the most effective leader of the future will be a facilitator.” He continues:

Although the old-fashioned ‘command and control’ model of leadership will continue to be important, especially in situations where clarity and speed are requirements, most organizations will find that a facilitation model of leadership works better. In the high-performing organization of the future, decisions will increasingly be made by bringing people together, pooling ideas and information, and moving toward some form of consensus. (Stringer, 2002, p. 220)

In the concluding article, we present our reflections and closing thoughts on OD, leadership, and change. We identify some of the information sources we find useful (and often inspiring) in making sense of research on and applications of those topics and discuss the importance of developments in these areas to the future of libraries.

We hope this issue of Library Trends will help to accelerate and facilitate the transition to newer models of service, structure, management, and leadership in libraries. In addition, we hope this collection of articles will encourage everyone interested in the future of libraries to experiment with new approaches to the operation of libraries and that an extensive community of practice, across all types of libraries, will evolve—one that focuses on conceptualizing and implementing the library of the future. We further hope our work, and that of our authors, will stimulate library employees at all levels to expect, demand, and work toward positive organizational cultures that enable all employees to contribute as effectively as possible to the mission of the library.

REFERENCES


The Significance of Organizational Development in Academic Research Libraries

Karen Holloway

Abstract
More and more academic research libraries are applying organizational development (OD) concepts in their organizations. The outcomes of focusing on and utilizing this management approach are described, including how OD has made significant differences in these libraries. To assess the current state of OD in academic research libraries, interviews were conducted in July–August 2003 with twelve individuals who have some part of OD in their job responsibilities or are library directors.

The approaches to implementing OD vary. In some organizations, it has been a complete library-wide undertaking, while in others the changes started in one or two units, sometimes with an overarching plan and sometimes with no intent to shift the entire organization. What is evident is that there is not a linear progression of OD from one step to another and it is a continuous process of change. Within the university structure, libraries have been given the leeway to be “different,” with the library becoming the focal point for demonstrating new ways to work in the academy. Most of those who have undertaken OD initiatives believe that their organizations would not be responsive or flexible if they had not committed to change.

As increasing numbers of academic research libraries are implementing organizational development (OD) concepts in their organizations, it is important to assess the results of focusing on and utilizing this management approach, as well as significant changes in these libraries due to OD. Because of the relatively new application of OD in the academic library arena, there is not an abundance of literature from which to draw conclusions.
on the effects of OD in these organizations. To supplement the literature that is available, I conducted interviews in July through August of 2003 with individuals who have some part of OD in their job responsibilities or are library directors. These individuals were identified through several means: journal articles and books; participation in an OD online discussion group; and presentations at a series of conferences on organizational change in libraries.1 Thirty-one academic libraries in North America and Europe were identified as having instituted some type of organizational change within the last ten years; of those identified, twelve individuals from nine libraries in the United States agreed to be interviewed.

The resulting list of interviewees is by no means a scientific sample since the total number of academic research libraries that are implementing some form of OD is not known. The interviews were conducted in order to create a sampling of the rationale, activities, and trends that OD represents in these libraries. The questions asked in the interviews appear in Table 1. Responses have been aggregated to form the basis of observations and conclusions in this article. The interviews were supplemented with publications describing libraries’ forays into OD, and these are cited accordingly.

**Definitions**

There are many textbook definitions of OD, as well as many approaches to implementing OD. Over thirty years ago, Richard Beckhard published *Organization Development: Strategies and Models*, in which he notes

more organizational leaders have realized that it is not enough to carry out piecemeal efforts to patch up an organization problem here, fix a procedure there, or change a job description. Today there is a need for longer-range, coordinated strategy to develop organization climates, ways of work, relationships, communications systems, and information systems. . . . It is out of those needs that systematic planned change efforts—organizational development—have emerged.” (Beckhard, 1969, p. 8)

In my research for this article I have found that academic libraries are

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**Table 1. Interview Questions**

1. Define organizational development as it is used in your organization.
2. Why is organizational development a part of your organization? When was it initiated?
3. What elements of organizational development are in place or in the planning stages?
4. How have organizational development initiatives made significant differences in your organization, specifically in areas of individual (employee) learning and growth, internal processes, financial/budgeting, and customer focus?
5. By what methods has your organization measured the success of these initiatives?
6. What is your role in the organization? Do you see the organizational development position as necessary in the long term? How do you think it will evolve?
using the term “organizational development” both in a formal manner, i.e., there are individuals or units in libraries that have OD as part of their titles, and in an informal manner when organizational development is part of an individual’s or unit’s function but the OD designation is not formally applied. Additionally, the term “organizational effectiveness” is being used in some quarters to connote a broader, ongoing initiative that is beyond the “development” stage. “Effectiveness” could also be viewed as a response to the economic climate, in that organizations have to demonstrate more accountability in order to secure dwindling resources.

The various answers to the question of how the term “organizational development” is used in an organization range from no definition, to systemwide engagement, to plans for the future. In more than one library the definition of OD is embodied in the work of an OD staff person, even if the larger staff population does not know or understand the term itself. Often OD is not understood as a succinct concept, even by those who are practitioners. There appear to be many pieces that make up OD; Table 2 contains some of the elements that contribute to the definition, as used in academic libraries.

The verbs used in Table 2 are intentionally in the active tense. What is apparent is that OD is a continuous process and, in many cases, a cyclical process. A definition of OD that has stood the test of time and captures most of these elements is that of Higgins: “a deliberate process of planned change which incorporates a long-range effort to improve an organization’s problem-solving and renewal processes, particularly through a more effective and collaborative management of organizational culture” (Higgins, 1982, p. 333).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2. Elements of OD</th>
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<tr>
<td>Putting decision-making closer to people doing the work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expressly understanding user needs and desires.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving group dynamics, organizational structure, and organizational culture.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developing shared accountability and responsibility.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning how to work collaboratively and across hierarchies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building trust.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being a flexible organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving processes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving services to internal and external customers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Making data-based decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing performance management tools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing and creating structures, processes, and systems that support the vision, goals, and values of the organization.</td>
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THE BEGINNINGS

Application of OD in academic research libraries appears to have begun in the early 1990s based on the published literature as well as those libraries represented in the interviews for which a starting date could be identified (ranging from 1993 to 2002). Several librarians were unable to pinpoint a specific year since the application of OD had been informal or evolutionary.

Given that businesses were implementing OD in the 1960s, we must ask what has taken academic research libraries so long to move from entrenched, hierarchical organizations to those demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness to customers, often through flattened management structures? One answer may be found by looking to the larger organization in which most research libraries reside: the university. Charles Osborn has succinctly described the diverging paths of the research university and its library. He notes that “in contrast to overall university inertia, academic research libraries have established a recent history of initiating changes of the most fundamental kind” (Osborn, 1997, p. 246).

Several of those interviewed for this article stated that the library within the university structure was given the leeway to be “different.” Directors and other library staff who have been successful in instituting organizational change have done their homework and have built strong relationships with key university administrators. In some cases, the library has become the focal point for demonstrating new ways to work in the academy. It is evident from a number of those interviewed, in particular library directors, that implementing a new structural organization within a university is not for the fainthearted. It takes the courage of conviction as well as support from university administrators.

Research into why academic libraries have moved to OD as a way to manage change in the organization revealed that technology has been the primary driver. In the preface to Restructuring Academic Libraries: Organizational Development in the Wake of Technological Change, Charles Schwartz states that “information technology in the 1990s is advancing more rapidly than our profession is prepared to assimilate the changes” (Schwartz, 1997, vii). At the time Schwartz conceptualized the book (1995), there were only a few articles in the literature that recognized that the demands of technology could not be met with traditional, hierarchical organizational structures.

What was discovered in the libraries surveyed is that technology is one of several drivers that has moved the organization to change. The economy as a driver was also evident in the responses to the question, “Why is Organizational Development part of your organization?” (see Table 3).

Most of the reasons for implementing OD are not mutually exclusive, that is, it was not one impetus alone that led an organization down the OD path. An atypical response to the question came from a library where there was not internal or external pressures to change, that is, there were
<table>
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<th>Table 3. OD Drivers</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TECHNOLOGY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Changing institutional framework to support a new information technology.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology advancements and costs.</td>
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<td>Continuous improvement for technical services after implementation of an integrated library system.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Changes needed to address technology-required development of new organizational capabilities.</td>
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<td><strong>BUDGET/FINANCIAL</strong></td>
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<td>Need to reduce the budget.</td>
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<td>Availability of special funding to support special projects and initiatives.</td>
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<td>Static or declining resources.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Escalating materials costs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Escalating (human resources) benefits costs.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CUSTOMER SERVICE/NEEDS</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Need to offer a particular service.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognition that customer services need to be changed.</td>
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<td>More customized services.</td>
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<td>Shift in students’ patterns of use of the library.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus on services to undergraduates; providing all services in the best way possible.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change/improve reference services.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Get as many electronic resources as possible directly to users.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>STAFFING/STRUCTURE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Resignation or retirement of key staff; vacancies led to opportunity to re-deploy remaining staff.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shrinking pools of available staff for new initiatives.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training crisis and lack of cross-training.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Need to re-deploy limited staff.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Changing jobs of technical services librarians.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Combining departments to be responsive to customers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training people how to work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Need to reallocate existing staff to new areas of work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Build collaborative skills in the organization.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Existing structure coming apart culturally and not meeting demands of users.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MEASURING/ACCOUNTABILITY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>A strategic plan has been in place for some time, but decided to focus more on accountability and ways to measure it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEADERSHIP</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vision of the university librarian to inculcate change in the leadership structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director’s vision of the library of the future, while facing budget cuts and the need to have flexible organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative by the director to make the library more flexible, agile, and responsive to change.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Director’s interest in changing the library’s culture.</td>
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no budget constraints, users were satisfied, and technology had been readily embraced. The director, however, wanted to get the library to act as a system. What is evident for most of the other respondents is that technology and the economic climate infiltrate almost all aspects of these initiatives.

An aspect of change that was interesting to assess is what OD has not been in these organizations. Unlike the early precepts of reengineering that were introduced by Hammer and Champy, libraries have not brought in these radical, dramatic change concepts to “blow up the old and replace it with something new” (Hammer & Champy, 1993, p. 33). Rather, it is apparent that libraries have, for the most part, taken more incremental steps through business improvement, business enhancement, or business modification approaches. Downsizing has occurred in some libraries due to shrinking budgets but not as an overt act of OD. Nor is there evidence from those interviewed that there was a conscientious displacement of librarians with support staff or vice versa.

Lastly, none of the changes described by participants in the survey were mandated by university administrations. The changes were initiated in the libraries by library directors along with an assortment of library staff, with staff members often taking lead roles. This is not to say that initiatives of this magnitude were undertaken in a vacuum. “Restructuring an organization, therefore, depends on understanding what your institutional culture and values are, and figuring out where you intend to go and how you can get there without violating revered norms. In other words, any library wanting to determine its own future must engage in some sort of formal planning with an eye on local traditions” (Kent, 1997, p. 186). At the University of Arizona Library, strategic planning incorporates an annual environmental scan, which includes review of the university’s mission, strategic plan, and other critical documents to ensure that the library is in alignment with the goals and objectives of its parent institution.

Implementing OD

The approaches to implementing OD vary. In some organizations, it has been a complete library-wide undertaking, while in other organizations the changes start in one or two units, sometimes with an overarching plan and sometimes with no intent to shift the entire organization. There are also examples of grassroots initiatives where a unit or group is given the authority to change its work but without strong support from the administration or a clear understanding by the remaining staff of what the group is doing.

Of the libraries surveyed, a variety of implementation strategies surfaced. In one library the staff in a public services unit wanted to start strategic planning, and as they talked about the effort and looked to internal resources to help them, it grew into a library-wide effort. The result has been that the library as a whole has redesigned the strategic planning process.
Strategic planning was the starting point for a number of libraries. In several libraries process improvement was the impetus to change, and one library has a goal to undertake one process improvement project each year. Other libraries restructured by first eliminating layers of administration (but not the people in those positions) and/or establishing a team-based organization and then moving to strategic planning and process improvement. Another library has focused on improving internal communication as a first step, in tandem with strengthening delegation and decision-making. A less direct approach has been the expansion of human relations/resources roles in the library to include staff development and training and the creation of new roles, such as coordinator of personnel programs or manager of staff learning and development.

To give structure to these efforts, libraries have adopted different approaches to organizing their OD efforts. Three models that have been implemented are Galbraith’s Star Model, the Balanced Scorecard, and Hoshin Planning.²

Galbraith’s Star Model is a systems approach to reorganization with five points of the star interrelated: (1) strategic planning, structure and roles of people in the organization; (2) span of control (size and interaction of teams); (3) work processes (communication, process mapping); (4) people and human resources policies, evaluation; and (5) training and development.

The Balanced Scorecard is a framework for tracking organizational performance through a set of quantifiable measures derived from an organization’s strategy. It can be implemented as a measurement system, a strategic management system, and/or a communication tool. The Balanced Scorecard was developed by Robert Kaplan and David Norton in the 1990s to expand an organization’s performance measurements beyond the financial realm. The four dimensions, when adapted to public and nonprofit sectors, are (1) employee learning and growth, (2) internal processes, (3) customer perspective, and (4) financial perspective. Strategy is at the core of all the dimensions and provides an additional link to all of them.

Hoshin Planning is a strategic planning process to help an organization achieve breakthrough services and products for customers, in part, by targeting a select few critical areas in which the organization can apply its human and financial resources. Stated goals and action plans are the mechanisms to close the gap between the current state and the desired state.

There is not one path to implementing OD, and in each organization paths may take various directions. What is evident is that there is not a linear progression of OD, which makes it difficult for those involved in organizational change to be able to state definitively where an organization is in its OD saga. Table 4 is a snapshot of the current status of OD in the libraries represented in the interviews.

Sustaining change and moving an organization through the various
paths of OD is a challenging way of life for the people in those libraries who have committed to OD precepts. Those who lead the OD efforts are sometimes selected by administrators or peers, sometimes they are self-appointed, sometimes they are surprised at finding they are viewed as the OD experts, and sometimes they are human resources specialists who are reluctantly or enthusiastically engaged in OD responsibilities. Some are given OD titles (for example, Associate University Librarian for OD), and others are trying to decide if having an OD title in the library would be a help or a hindrance. Some have a master’s degree in OD, and others are learning as they go. Some are the sole person in their organizations who is struggling to turn the ship, and others are part of an acknowledged core group of OD resources and in-house consultants. It is clear that the work associated with leading and guiding OD in libraries is evolutionary, and most of those involved in this work believe there are increasing roles for OD specialists in academic research libraries.

**Assessment and Measurement**

One of the more difficult areas of instituting any new management system is to assess and measure its success in both the short term and long term. Some organizations approach this task through methodical, planned means. In 2001 the University of Virginia Library adopted the Balanced Scorecard to better use data to make choices (Self, 2003). After a relatively short period of time, the system appears to be a qualified success, leading the organization to focus on important topics and to set organizational priorities.

An assessment of the learning and growth dimension of the Balanced Scorecard is described by Franklin in a case study of the University of

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**Table 4. Current State of OD in Participating Libraries**

| Focus on the strategic planning cycle with emphasis on the Balanced Scorecard. |
| Progress made in setting strategic priorities. |
| In limbo due to negotiations with a bargaining unit; however, exempt staff have been transitioning from work that will not be needed. |
| More work in understanding user needs and desires. |
| Human resources and training are works in progress. |
| Annually offer content-based symposia that focus on some area that engages staff on an important issue; 3 days on organizational methods and techniques; 2–3 days for planning. |
| Creating new positions to support OD. |
| Working on a multi-tiered program for leadership development. |
| Process improvement in specific areas. |
| Development of new employee orientation program to include elements of organizational philosophy of change and introduction to team practices and principles. |
Connecticut Libraries presented in 2003 (Franklin, 2003). In the study he describes the process by which the libraries measured the extent to which articulated organizational values were achieved through a library-wide reorganization.

What measurement activities are being pursued by the libraries surveyed? Four of the nine are using the Balanced Scorecard, while the remaining five participate in LibQUAL+™. LibQUAL+™ is a suite of services made available through the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) that are used to solicit, track, understand, and act upon users’ opinions of service quality.

In addition to the tools noted above, many libraries are also utilizing customer focus groups and surveys targeted to specific user groups. Also, library staff surveys and focus groups are conducted to elicit training needs, assess the cultural climate, and generate feedback on how the organization is doing from the employees’ viewpoints.

Libraries appear to compile data willingly and frequently but not always in support of analyzing progress toward change and impacts of change. Required external data are not necessarily those that help an organization determine its success. So in addition to meeting university-imposed or association-imposed data reporting requirements, some libraries are developing meaningful quality standards that support progress toward goals and are indicators of success in reaching those goals.

At the University of Arizona Library quality standards include the increase in the number of people served; the availability of systems to users and physical and electronic access to collections; the increased ability of students to select, find, and use information in their research; and the timeliness of responses to requests for services or materials. Teams report on progress on the quality standards four times a year, both in written form and in presentations to the library.

A few libraries have not undertaken any measurements or assessment beyond those provided by LibQUAL+™, and two of the surveyed libraries do not have any measurements or assessments in place relative to OD initiatives. One respondent noted that their measurement efforts have been significantly enhanced by establishing an internal office for program assessment. Experimentation with new measures is surely a part of OD, and this experimentation is “for the purpose of discovering what needs to be done to achieve the shared vision of participating fully in the educational enterprise of the institutions of higher learning” (Phipps, 2001, p. 657).

**Impacts and Outcomes**

Although libraries are all over the map in terms of where and how OD is being implemented, most of those interviewed for this article were able to reflect on how OD has made a difference in their organizations. Table 5 contains their observations, which are organized by the perspectives used in the Balanced Scorecard.
Table 5. The Effects of OD in Participating Libraries

1) Employee Learning and Growth

Individual learning and growth is the keystone of whole OD program and commitment to an in-house training program is essential.

Recognizing and celebrating the differences among individuals has brought additional strength to the organization as a whole.

More cross-training and technology training has occurred.

Staff development is available for all staff classifications in the library.

Employees are taking responsibility to share their knowledge, skills, and abilities with others as part of culture, not because they are told to do so.

A lot of learning is going on, even without well-expressed plans and objectives.

Cultural assessment has led to development of roles and responsibilities for leaders; it is clearer how they are expected to communicate with staff and to work with them on decisions.

The Birkman Inventory instrument is administered to each individual to determine work styles; it is used as a frame for looking at team conflict and other team issues.a

Most staff have taken the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), and there are plans to have all new staff take the instrument to help team members better understand and build their relationships. b

There has been a distinct change in culture; staff are more inclined to do things rather than just talk about them.

A learning curriculum has been developed with mostly in-house resources, although all staff get some funding for outside workshops, seminars, etc.

The cross-functional project team environment has fostered accelerated learning opportunities library-wide.

All staff are equally involved in activities; this has broken down some class distinctions.

2) Internal Processes

Teams are working together more collaboratively.

Beginning to think about process mapping to get rid of redundant procedures.

People understand that there are group processes and they matter.

Development of team-level mission, values, and operating principles.

Focus on technology processes in terms of how information is delivered to the customer.

Introducing the concept of cross-functional teams.

Existing widespread ability and willingness to map processes and analyze process effectiveness.

3) Customer Perspective

Initial process improvement initiatives provided a test of customer focus.

Improved access to digital/electronic information.

Improved Web site.

New database services.

Improving training facilities for students.

Increased focus on customer service and training to support customer service.

Decreased delivery time in interlibrary loan and document delivery.
Library-wide goals are developed based on the customer perspective, that is, what does the customer want and desire.

4) Financial Perspective

Enormously successful in getting funding from provost.

Budgeting is done by a collaborative team, leading to more transparent information and understanding of the budget by more staff.

The library was only one of a few campus units whose budget was not cut; a direct correlation to OD can only be hypothesized, although library leadership believes this contributed to support.

Helped the library director articulate what the library’s goals are to the campus, resulting in administration and funding support.

Recognition on campus of our successes, which has led to continuing financial support in times of dwindling resources.

\(^a\)For more on the Birkman instrument, refer to www.birkman.com/ (retrieved May 10, 2004).

\(^b\)For more information on the Myers-Briggs instrument, refer to www.myersbriggs.org/ (retrieved May 10, 2004).

Vision and strategy are situated at the center of the Balanced Scorecard system. For several libraries dramatic differences in this area were reported. Library-wide goals were finally understood by staff, even if there was not complete agreement with the goals. Several libraries formally implemented strategic planning processes that engage most staff, including in one instance the concept of funding to the plan (not planning to funds available).

In summary, based on the interviews conducted for this article, systemic changes that improve an organization’s effectiveness can substantially impact all parts of the library, whether or not that is the planned outcome. An OD approach comes with the challenge of balancing the competing values in an organization.\(^4\) As one person interviewed noted, success in OD cannot be compared to what might have been if changes in structures and systems had not been made. Most of those who have undertaken OD initiatives, however, believe that their organizations would not be responsive or flexible if they had not committed to change.

Notes

1. The online discussion group is sponsored by the Library Organization and Management section, Library Administration and Management, American Library Association. Living the Future conferences have been held biennially since 1996; information and selected presentations are available at http://www.library.arizona.edu/conference/ (retrieved May 10, 2004).


3. For more information on LibQUAL+™, refer to http://www.libqual.org/ (retrieved May 10, 2004). LibQUAL+™ is a registered trademark of Texas A&M University.

4. See works by Schwartz, 1997; Faerman, 1993; and Quinn, 1988.
REFERENCES
Innovation and Strategy: Risk and Choice in Shaping User-Centered Libraries

Kathryn J. Deiss

Abstract
Creating services that add value for the customer takes precedence over all other drivers in determining organizational success in the twenty-first century. Libraries uniquely capable of anticipating and meeting customer needs in ways that mirror a changing world are the libraries that are deemed successful and, therefore, are able to attract resources and talent. It is evident from current environmental indicators that organizations need to utilize two tools skillfully in order to create customer value: innovation and strategy. While strategy can exist without innovation, it is unlikely that effective innovation can occur without the use of strategy. For organization leaders the challenge is threefold: develop the ability to create value-added innovative services on a continuous basis; utilize strategy to make decisions about innovations; and deliver innovative services to the customer. This article will review recent theories of innovation and strategy and place them in the context of the work of nonprofit organizations (such as most libraries). Suggested approaches to creating innovation and effective strategy will also be reviewed.

Strategy and Innovation: Building a Twenty-First-Century Knowledge Practice

“Different is not always better but better is always different.” (Luce, 2003)

There is nothing new about the need for organizations to be creative in problem solving, to be customer oriented, or to be strategic. When pointed
to in many professional and trade presses as well as by the media in general, however, the need for organizational innovation and strategic thinking is rarely defined and put in specific context. This article will explore the nature of innovation, particularly in the public sector, and will look at the role that strategic thinking plays in fostering and promoting innovation. These issues will be placed in the context of organizational development in libraries.

**What Is Innovation?**

At face value an invention is something that strikes most of us as ephemeral and sometimes foolhardy—things seen on late-night television advertisements. Yet, we all know and use the many inventions that have changed modern life in the past century: telephones, dishwashers, computers, automatic teller machines (ATMs), and so on. These are innovations—things that change the way we can do what we want to do; they have added value to our daily lives. In many cases what was once an innovation is now taken for granted. Remarkable inventions, once assimilated into daily life, become routine, an imperceptible part of our lives. Interestingly, however, once assimilated an innovation can be eclipsed and even made obsolete by a new innovation. Examples such as cell phones, music on compact discs, and computers indicate that something new can be created on the basis of older innovations.

In the public sector innovation often relates to services rather than products. Creative new services and processes that make a difference to customers are where the prospects for innovation lie. Potential innovation in this area is less obvious than in the area of three-dimensional products, but innovative services can have the power to keep existing customers and attract new customers.

For innovation to occur libraries must tap the creative potential of their staffs, vendors, and customers. While very much related, creativity and innovation are distinct from one another in important ways. Creativity is the act of generating new ideas and new perspectives. Innovation, on the other hand, occurs when creativity is applied and a product or service results. Creativity (including creative thinking skills), then, is certainly critical to the practice of innovation. Thus, creativity is a means and innovation is an end.

Leonard and Swap define innovation as “the embodiment, combination, and/or synthesis of knowledge in novel, relevant, valued new products, processes, or services” (Leonard & Swap, 1999, p. 7).

Creativity is a process of developing and expressing novel ideas that are likely to be useful. This definition assumes the use of specific tools and skills in order to develop these novel ideas. Innovation implies a buyer or target audience for these new products, processes, or services. In much of the literature on innovation, booming profit margins and focused competition are implied in the commercial sphere. How do libraries, as nonprofit
organizations, create innovation when they do not have profit margins to watch, or when they do not wish to compete in the same fashion as many corporate sector enterprises do?

Library literature points to innovations in organizational structure and performance. Yet these do not, in and of themselves, create added value for the user. For instance, the powerful approach taken at the University of Arizona (to name just one library) in restructuring how they approach work is, in and of itself, not an innovation that adds value for the customer. The innovative services made possible by the new organizational team-based model, however, are what could be pointed to as true innovation—that is, new, desired, or needed services that add value for university faculty, students, and other scholars. Improving our internal methods and practices indirectly, or perhaps not at all, has an impact on how the end user does what he or she needs to do. Innovation is more significantly about what our target audience can do—about the increased capacity of library users to do what they want and need to do in the way that most benefits their productivity, pleasure, and excellence.

In his unique book *Sustaining Innovation*, Paul Light describes the critical difference between innovation in the private sector and innovation in the public sector:

> Whereas in the private sector an innovation merely needs to be profitable to be worth doing, in the public sector innovation must be about doing something worthwhile. . . . Second, public sector innovation involves *more than simply doing the public’s business well*. . . . Third, non-profit and government innovation involves *the broader public good*. The ultimate purpose of innovation is not to win awards, boost public confidence, or attract foundation support, but to create public value. (Light, 1998, p. xv, emphasis in the original)

Hence, rather than being defined as something “new to us,” innovation in the public sector must be about facilitating the work of our primary constituents in ways that are new and useful to them. It does not matter how innovative libraries are in creating their organizations if they do not produce innovative services, processes, and products for their clientele—library users.

**How Do Public Sector Organizations Innovate?**

Light studied a number of nonprofit and government organizations in a research project designed to understand how these organizations innovated “naturally”—meaning innovation was part of the organization’s culture and occurred on a consistent and continuous basis. Interestingly not all the organizations he studied understood the need for innovation when initially confronting problems and obstacles. The organizations that were handicapped at the outset learned how to innovate precisely because of the difficulties in which they found themselves. The organizations Light
studied (from the most resource-challenged to the resource-rich) had four principles in common that allow them to consistently innovate:

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

Light describes these principles as internal strategies for innovation. Externally, these principles must be translated into ideas, actions, and increased direct value that resonate with the constituents for whom the innovations are created. It is not sufficient to create organizational principles that describe an innovation culture without the subsequent creation of innovative products, processes, and services.

Political Implications of Innovation

Few would argue with the merits of continuous innovation and innovation that stems from organizational mission. Why, then, do some innovations simply fall flat? Why is it that the best of intentions do not suffice to engage the individuals for whom the innovation was created? Organizations can innovate wildly but be thoroughly unsuccessful in getting the attention of the client. Why does this happen? Grudin, author of *The Grace of Great Things* (1990), a book about innovation and creativity, argues that sensitivity to the politics of innovation as well as the current social context are crucial to the success of any innovation. The political aspects of life are set in the matrix of social interactions. It stands to reason, then, that the political and social climates are closely tied and that they must be considered as interrelated and interdependent factors.

The social climate surrounding an innovation has much to do with how it is perceived. And perception has much to do with the success or lack thereof of any innovation or innovative service. Thus, it is important to have a political (in the neutral sense of the word) acumen in order to be successful at innovation. A primary political area for reflection is that of readiness: it matters a great deal whether or not a public is ready for the innovation. Grudin (1990) cites the famous example of the Dutch inventor Cornelis Drebbel. In 1624 Cornelis Drebbel proposed to the Prince of Wales that he be given £20,000 to create a solar power device on the hills outside London that would create heating power for all of London. He was summarily dismissed as being a crackpot interested in bizarre creations that serve no one. Grudin uses this example to describe how critical the politics of innovation are to the acceptance and survival of an invention/innovation. Drebbel’s invention was ahead of its time—that is, not politically and socially attuned—and was not easily perceived as possible or desirable by
the general public and the potential funding sources of the project. Drebbel ended up largely forgotten and penniless, although he actually had created numerous useful inventions that were adopted. His largest innovation or invention—the solar power scheme—placed him squarely in opposition to current socially acceptable thought. Using this example, Grudin points to the two-way interaction between innovator and society. Without social acceptance, an innovation is but a fancy.

Even our historical picture of successful ideas is somewhat clouded. When we look at triumphant innovations of the past, we see them, so to speak, from their own future: we confront them as *faits accomplis*, hardened into the sedate structure of our own cultural background. . . . Our blindness to these subjects, coupled with our historical neglect of valid innovations that failed, helps build the illusion . . . that innovation is easy, that . . . progress is automatic. (Grudin, 1990, p. 142)

The ability of an organization to detect how ready customers are for a particular innovation is related to its ability to interpret what the customer needs and wants—and, as importantly, what the social and political climate is—at any given moment. Additionally, creating effective messages about the innovation for the intended customers is an integral aspect of the innovation itself.

For nonprofit organizations, where the mission is intensely reliant on relationships with customers, the concepts of customer readiness and effective message conveyance are even more critical. These customers are likely to be accustomed to current practices and unable to see the very good reasons or benefits to change. The introduction of user-powered terminals for book charge out (self-checkout terminals) by libraries is an excellent example of an innovation where the message about what it was, what benefits (value) it brought the user, and why it existed was poorly conveyed. It is also a good example of the failure to match the introduction of a new service with the customer’s readiness to adopt new behaviors. In the early 1980s when this innovation was being introduced in many public libraries in the United States, this new service resulted in longer lines rather than the intended shorter ones, more technological hurdles for the customer to manage and learn, technological glitches that required work-arounds (such as large format materials that could not be handled by the equipment), and other such impediments to self-checkout being embraced by the very customers it was meant to please (DeJoice and Pongracz, 2000, pp. 5–8). Societally, this service came before the public was ready to “do the work themselves”—before the age of self-service. This age we now take for granted. It is marked by increasing numbers of services being provided where the customer actually does the “labor” him or herself and where the benefits are described as timesaving or comfort producing. Examples of this abound. Supermarket self-checkout, banking, and airline check-in, for instance, are services in which customers are greatly involved in performing
the service themselves, and these are heralded as having some value to us. Typically this value has to do with the time saved or convenience, such as the location where the service can be accessed. Libraries could have managed the aforementioned self-checkout innovation by engaging with the vendors in the design of the equipment as well as by observing customer behavior and then mapping their processes to the behavior rather than vice-versa. It may be that in the early 1980s when this innovation was first introduced, customers were not ready to view themselves in a self-service mode.

Patterns of customer behavior are dynamic guides to innovation potential. The practice of observing customers’ information-seeking behaviors, for instance, is likely to yield information about where an innovation might really have value—thus increasing the likelihood that customers will embrace the innovation.

Clearly, political context and societal readiness matter if innovation is to be accepted and utilized. Equally important, and part of the politics of innovation, is how the innovation is introduced. The tension between innovation and the status quo is such that innovation is often seen as disruption. In fact, Lawrence Lynn Jr. once defined innovation as “an original disruptive act” (quoted in Light, 1998, p. xv). How disruption is conveyed and what the disruption actually signifies in terms of a better experience for the customer will create the success or lack thereof of any innovation. There is an inevitable push-pull aspect to the introduction of any change. People (and organizations) tend toward stasis and the comfort of the known. Hence, regardless of its value an innovation may be seen as highly disruptive. Libraries that communicate well with the customer will be able to manage the political and social elements of the change being introduced. Perhaps more importantly, libraries that are able to manage the relationship they have with the customer in an effective way will be better able to help that customer weather the disruption that the introduction of innovation produces.

In order to manage the relationship as well as the communication with customers, libraries should understand the elements that are being disrupted by the innovation and those that are not. Often a change or disruption is seen as a sweeping event rather than something that alters some things while leaving others as they are. William Bridges, noted authority on the subject of change management, has said that the management of change is about two things: managing events and managing emotions about those events. Bridges states that it is as important to describe what is not changing as it is to describe what is changing (Bridges, 1991).

**Barriers to Innovation**

Most organizations aspire to both create change and be innovative. During consulting trips to many organizations across the United States
and Canada, I have heard the senior leaders and staff of research libraries describe in both verbal and written form the desire to be innovative, and yet these organizations often freely describe the frustration of not achieving innovation at the level or volume they desire. What barriers prevent libraries from pursuing innovation on a natural and routine basis?

One significant factor relates to the mature nature of most library organizations. They are not start-up organizations, nor are they struggling to establish themselves. Mature or aging organizations generally have a much more difficult time taking risks, experimenting, and creating innovation. Studies by Kim Cameron and Robert Quinn point to the changes an organization experiences as it ages. What is prized in a mature organization is not what is prized in a younger or developing organization (Cameron & Quinn, 1998).

Mature organizations, by their very nature, seek to ensure continued stability and success through reliance on practices that have worked in the past. In addition, more mature organizations have built up deep cultures. There is a perception amongst many of these organizations that there is a great deal to be lost individually and collectively by engaging in practices with the potential to attract the attention of constituents and parent organizations. One director explained to me that he wished his organization would take risks and create new services—as long as it did not end up in a less than flattering story on the front page of the local newspaper!

A young organization—one that is still in a formative stage, establishing its raison d’etre, clarifying its values, and describing its clientele—may have more to lose in the short term, yet it is likely to take more risks, experiment a good deal, play fast and loose with ideas, and worry much less about organizational structure, policies, and rules. Because of these organizational culture elements, there is a likelihood that more innovation will occur more quickly in a younger organization simply due to the pressure to form an identity and a service and capture a piece of the customer’s attention. There is an improvisational aspect to the younger organization that the older organization does not have. The disadvantage for the younger organization is largely its lack of resources and a proven track record. A good example of the younger organization’s approach was seen in the early days of Apple Computer. The founders felt a passion for their innovations and products, were looking for their client base, were not interested in building policy, and were willing to take risks that the more mature IBM organization would have thought foolhardy or that would have been prevented outright by the company’s policies and procedures. Apple’s youthful flexibility allowed the company to create in what is reported to be a fluid and constant way. IBM, meanwhile, took a very measured approach to the production of a new product.

Libraries, as a whole, tend to be mature organizations, and thus they have developed an ability to consistently replicate what they have been good
at doing in the past. This proves to be an immense hurdle to organizations seeking to become innovative. The leaders of some mature organizations have stated to me that their innovations occurred “in spite” of their organizations. Such radical statements point to the ability of human imagination, ingenuity, and sheer passion to overcome existing structural and cultural limitations.

Additionally, specific barriers to the practice of innovation have been pointed to by researchers such as Moss Kanter (2002) and Ulrich (2002): organizational stability, standards, expertise, performance-oriented cultures, and an adherence to certainty. While normally thought of as beneficial characteristics, these play out in less than helpful ways when it comes to creating a climate conducive to innovation. When viewing barriers to innovation in action there is a clear tension between an accepted beneficial practice—typically that which is known—and another desirable practice more likely to lead to innovation. The result is a set of dichotomies that are extremely interesting from an organizational development perspective. I now turn to the examination of five dichotomies.

**Stability vs. Disturbance**

As stated above, most libraries are not young organizations. Their maturity means that they have reached a level of stability not easily shaken. Bureaucracies, policies, and procedures have essentially codified the library’s practices. To create innovation, however, an organization must be able both to respond to, and to self-induce, disturbance—even turbulence (Gryskiewicz, 1999). Innovation is born of new ideas, and often new ideas are seen as a disturbance to the accepted practice, the norm, or the tools of the successful past. For most people, disturbance does not typically correlate to effectiveness. As already mentioned above, much in a mature culture pushes against creating purposeful disturbance. Without disturbance to alter perspectives, mental models, and successful practices, innovation is unlikely to occur. Even a library’s long-held values—such as consistency, stability, and planning—that allow it to feel and behave confidently in relation to its mission are, in fact, often in opposition to the values underlying disturbance, which have to do with the positive sides of change and the energy afforded by disruption (Cameron & Quinn, 1998).

**Standards vs. Unknown Consequences or Patterns**

Libraries have succeeded in organizing information largely due to the creation of highly effective standards of practice and methods of managing knowledge and information. These standards can stand in the way of innovation simply by their very existence. Having created a successful “way of doing things,” library organizations may find it is much more difficult to imagine other ways of doing things even when environments change dramatically. A case in point is the relatively slow response in libraries to the appearance of metadata, the tagging of elements within text in order
to be able to search more deeply for information and correlations. Rather than leading the information field in the innovative use of metadata, libraries find themselves playing a catch-up game in order to use this tool. Consistently relied upon and successful ways of doing things stood in the way of recognizing and capitalizing on an opportunity for innovation.

**Expertise vs. Play**

Professions are expert based. Librarians spend considerable amounts of time becoming competent as professionals, and libraries prize this expertise above all other characteristics when hiring and developing professional staff. Yet this very competence may present a barrier to innovation. Why? Experts are, by and large, most uncomfortable with being inexpert or unknowledgeable (Argyris, 1986; see also Argyris, 1991). In addition to this, experts consider themselves “serious” people and so are less likely to engage in “play” as a way of exploring serious subject matter. Because it taps our creative intelligence, play is critical to innovation. The creative act cannot occur without a good deal of play and experimentation (Goleman, Kaufman, & Ray, 1992). Additionally, organizational cultures of mature organizations are likely to value play in the workplace much less than do younger organizations. Eisenhardt describes the need for groups to develop collective intuition and points to play as a significant factor in a group’s ability to develop this intuition: “These players, for example, develop their so-called intuition through experience. Through frequent play, they gain the ability to recognize and process information in patterns and blocks that form the basis of intuition. This patterned processing (what we term ‘intuition’) is faster and more accurate than processing single pieces of information” (Eisenhardt, 2001, p. 90).

**Performance vs. Practice**

Because they are expert based and service oriented, libraries develop “performance oriented” cultures unlikely to be amenable to “practicing” in real time with real customers. This essentially means that libraries have no practice fields. Practice fields allow individuals and groups to learn in a simulated, or safe, environment or in a real environment with the support of seasoned professionals as coaches and teachers. Even in the highly risky expert-based medical profession, the concept of practice fields—consider internships and residencies in teaching hospitals—is an honored and important one. In libraries, however, putting into play an experimental practice for a short time in order to learn is not common.

**Certainty vs. Risk**

The final and, in some ways, the most difficult dichotomy is that of certainty versus risk. As an organization develops stability, certainty and consistent replicability of experience is prized above risk and uncertainty. In addition, mixed messages regarding the safety of engaging in risk-re-
lated activities permeate many organizational cultures. Telling people to feel free to take risks, experiment, and make mistakes and then creating policies and procedures that purvey an opposite message creates an often unintended “fear of risk” climate. This unfortunate mixed message is not only a fundamental barrier to innovation; it can also create anxiety in an organization that draws energy away from creative and innovative work.

While the dichotomies described above indicate why it is difficult to create a culture of innovation, they by no means entirely prevent it. Innovations do come forth under even the most conflicted situations, and they succeed because of a leader’s or a group’s ability to think strategically and to know and understand the world of strategy.

**Strategy and Innovation: A Symbiotic Relationship**

Innovation without the development of strategy leads to unimplementable innovations, innovations that are misunderstood by the customers, or innovations that are ill-timed and insensitive to the milieu in which the customer lives. If innovation is about creating public value and customer success, strategy creation is about information gathering in relation to the environment (trend information, customer pattern information, customer need and readiness information, etc.). It is about assessing the political landscape and choosing where to put energy and effort (resources). Most importantly, it is about the generation of a multiplicity of perspectives; in effect, strategy creation is about deciding how, when, and where to innovate and for whom.

Organizations that create strategic plans that build on the past are not engaged in strategy creation; they are engaged in writing plans to describe short-term aspirations and possibly only describing tactics related to what has been, what is, and what will be in internally focused ways. Instead, the practice of strategy creation must tap collective intuition, creativity, and knowledge to develop the “new” at precisely the right moment.

This requires much more finesse and skill than agreeing on a number of goals and objectives for the next two years. Gary Hamel, strategy innovation guru, states that “The essential problem in organizations today is a failure to distinguish planning from strategizing.” In this context strategizing is critical to leading innovation (Hamel, 1996, p. 71).

While goals and objectives are important, more significant importance lies in the area of developing the capacity for strategic thinking, mental model busting, and risk taking. Strategy creation means generating thousands of ideas and possibilities, not just a few. Developing the capacity for strategic thinking at the individual, group, and organizational level requires creating a means for people to talk about what they observe, to explore how this maps to the environment and, most importantly, to talk about possibilities. Gary Hamel cites the need to create powerful internal constituencies for “what could be” (Hamel, 2003). These new “what could
be” constituencies would match and even compete with the already powerful internal constituencies focused on “what is.”

Markides points out that uniqueness is transitory and that, while an organization might find a unique strategic position at any given moment, this position will not last as the environment changes, competition appears, and customers change. Libraries understand that they are, indeed, in competition with others for the attention of users as well as for resources to create customer solutions. Thus, libraries must also be willing to abandon successful approaches in order to search for and test new and innovative strategies (Cusumano & Markides, 2001).

**Implications for Organizational Development**

Organizational development (OD) professionals in libraries and in the consulting organizations that serve libraries can assist libraries in discovering what they need to do to become more strategically innovative. From an OD perspective, organizations seeking to understand their innovation practices and strategy skills more clearly should undertake the following:

- organizational assessment (develop an organizational baseline)
- develop a dialogue about innovation and strategy
- invest in organizational learning and teach staff to be innovative strategic thinkers
- develop organizational systems that support the work of innovators and strategic thinkers throughout the organization

These four areas for organizational development work are described more fully below.

*Benchmarking the Organization*

Developing a baseline for the organization is an important first step in assessing areas for development. This baseline describes patterns of organizational behavior across multiple measures. One method for doing this is the organizational climate assessment—typically a survey instrument that allows the institution to see organizational behavior as measured across specific indicators. This tool can yield important information about how staff feels in terms of the ability to take risks, etc. Such a census needs a rationale and context in order to be taken seriously. The benefits of taking “the pulse” of the organization are multiple. The organization will have a snapshot of the climate at one moment in time, providing a platform for departure and for designing learning. In addition members of the organization will have data and a common language to discuss what is needed to make the organization more future oriented, more innovation oriented, and more satisfying for members.

One very strong research-based instrument is the Campbell Organization Survey (COS). The COS was developed by David P. Campbell, Smith-
Richardson Senior Research Fellow at the Center for Creative Leadership and a noted authority on assessment instruments. This instrument measures organizational satisfaction across seventeen indicators: the work itself, working conditions, level of stress, coworkers, diversity, supervision, top leadership, pay, benefits, job security, promotions, feedback, planning, ethics, quality, innovation, and general contentment. Either a sample is taken or the entire staff responds to the instrument. Results are charted in relation to the normative research data gathered by Campbell. This baseline can then be used to determine areas for growth and development and areas for celebration. The COS has been used in a few research libraries in the United States and Canada and has been widely used in higher education in general (Campbell, 1994).

Another assessment instrument, KEYS to Creativity, also developed by the Center for Creative Leadership in collaboration with Harvard University professor Teresa Amabile, focuses specifically on assessing management practices that support or inhibit the climate for creativity and innovation in an organization. Measures include organizational encouragement, supervisory encouragement, work group supports, sufficient resources, challenging work, freedom, organizational impediments, and workload pressure (Center for Creative Leadership, 1995). I do not know of any library that has used this assessment tool; however, it is possible that it would be of great interest to nonprofit organizations given their increasing need to do more with less—that is, to be creative and innovative.

Information gleaned from such instruments can be looked at in the context of other knowledge about the organization in order to develop a set of organizational and individual learning needs and growth plans. For instance, questions such as the following could be generated: do members of the organization need to learn more about creativity tools; does staff need to learn more about strategy creation and strategic thinking; do staff need customer-in thinking training or risk-taking help; does the organization spend more time maintaining internal systems than creating external solutions; and so on. An organization seeking to engage in strategic innovation needs to understand how it learns what it learns. Paying close attention to and pointing out organizational learning is something that all members of the organization can learn to do with the assistance of revealing data such as is made possible through the use of assessment instruments.

**Developing an Organizational Dialogue**

One of the most important activities an organization can engage in is the creation of multiple organizational dialogues. In the words of William Isaacs, “dialogue is a conversation in which people think together in relationship. Thinking together implies that you no longer take your own position as final. You relax your grip on certainty and listen to the possibilities that result simply from being in relationship with others—possibilities
that might not otherwise have occurred” (Isaacs, 1999, p. 19). The purpose of dialogues is to surface ideas, to explore perceptions and assumptions, to forge understanding, and, hopefully, to develop the ability for powerful collective insight. Dialogue requires members of an organization, department, or team to suspend the need for decision and/or closure in order to make room for a fuller exploration of a specific topic. For instance, a working group or team might choose to conduct a dialogue session to explore a topic such as the model used by the library to deliver reference services. The dialogue would not be conducted in order to make a decision but rather to better understand the group’s assumptions and knowledge of their perceptions about the way they deliver reference services. This enlightening activity, while uncomfortable and counterintuitive to many groups, often yields information that can be used later on to make effective decisions. The OD or human resources professional needs training in facilitating dialogue of this kind because it differs from other types of meetings that are often facilitated (such as management meetings, retreats, and so forth).

Investing in Organizational Learning

Organizational learning, a concept first developed by Chris Argyris and Donald Schön and more recently developed into a set of tools and practices by Peter Senge, refers to a set of practices useful to organizations in developing the ability to learn and to know how they learn. (Argyris & Schön 1978, 1996; Senge, 1990) Practices such as the exploration of mental models—the understanding of the “deeply held internal images of how the world works” (Senge, 1990, p. 174)—and the testing of assumptions are crucial to the creation of innovations. Organizational learning also implies the freedom to take risks, to practice and experiment, and to make mistakes. Allowing play as part of learning is also fundamental to finding innovation potential.

Staff development in the areas of strategic thinking and creativity and innovation are as critical to the organization’s success as are the fundamental functional skills. Investment in the area of strategic thinking will pay off when members of the organization are able to recognize causal relationships between their assumptions or actions and the behaviors of their customers, just to name one important benefit. No amount of functional expertise and skill is useful if the customers of libraries turn elsewhere to get what they need rather than finding the innovations at the library. Investing in technical or functional expertise at the expense of investing in broader, organization-spanning skills is shortsighted. Staff need skill development in creativity tools, the process of innovation, and strategic thinking and strategy in general. These skills will help the organization focus on its mission in the most dynamic way possible regardless of external environmental factors.
Hamel has said, “Radical innovation comes from generating a collective sense of destiny, from unleashing the imagination of people across the organization and teaching people how to see unconventional opportunities” (Hamel, 2003, p. 3). What more powerful concept is there than the idea of “generating a collective sense of destiny?” We have seen how the public sector has utilized this energy to put new and innovative products in our hands. For example, consider Nokia’s industry-changing personalization of the cellular phone; everyone at Nokia had to embrace this humanization of the tool in order to create the variety of options they have produced. In the same way, the nonprofit organization can produce an inspiring, driving set of themes or foci in order to unleash the imagination and creative energy of staff.

**Developing Organizational Systems that Support Innovation**

The OD or human resources professional can help senior leadership design organizational systems that support and encourage innovative thinking and radical ideas. In some cases this may mean looking at the organization’s culture and considering what the impediments to strategic innovation might be and how those impediments might be removed. Ironically it takes creative and innovative thought to develop internal mechanisms and systems that support creativity and innovation. Organizational leaders willing to abandon the safety of the now and the known in order to realistically be able to say they are willing to see people make mistakes on the road to innovation will be repaid through a higher level of commitment and energy throughout the organization. The OD specialist can certainly help senior leadership in creating a learning climate that fosters risk taking and engagement of the external environment.

**Conclusion**

Innovation and strategic thinking are critical to any organization’s future and have direct correlations to the organization’s mission and purpose. The development of methods for reducing barriers as well as increasing staff confidence, commitment, and skill levels is important if libraries are to become truly innovative. Understanding customer readiness and need as well as patterns of behavior can afford perspectives on where, how, and when an innovation might suit an organization.

The research on innovation and strategy shows that skills and abilities in these areas can be learned and applied. Indeed, libraries, such as the University of Arizona and Los Alamos National Laboratory Library, among numerous others, are engaged in learning and applying these skills and are doing so effectively. The experience of these libraries proves that it is possible to create space and energy for innovation through understanding organizational cultures better and through reinforcing organizational learning, risk taking, and strategic thinking.
As the late biologist Stephen Jay Gould expressed it, “Sometimes we do things that are not maximally efficient because they have human value” (Gould, 2002, p. 25). This is the reason for strategic innovation in the nonprofit world. Libraries create public value, but they must advance with their environments to continue to do so in a way that is valued by the public. Innovation and strategic thinking are the ways in which they can be clearly user oriented and customer driven, to use two hackneyed but very meaningful terms. Libraries create successful magic and learning; in order to innovate for the customer’s sake, however, it might mean forsaking some efficiencies.

Library leaders, particularly senior leaders, have a responsibility to serve the organization by encouraging a less static, more flexible environment. Additionally, leaders need to help stabilize the climate when the organization is deeply engaged in producing a disruptive innovation—that is, creating excitement and confidence at the same time in order to support staff in their efforts.

The development of leaders throughout libraries at all levels begins with the education they receive before they arrive at their first professional position: schools of library and information science also have a role to play in the development of strategic thinking skills and the understanding of how library organizations function and succeed.

Innovative acts are brave and courageous acts, and library staff needs to feel that these acts are worthwhile as well as worthy of the effort that goes into them. To create climates that encourage strategic innovation is to prepare an organization for the future as well as to meet the present.

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Organizational Cultures of Libraries as a Strategic Resource

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Abstract
Theorists have suggested that organizational culture is a strategic resource that has value in ensuring the continuing existence and success of organizations (Michalisin, Smith, & Kline, 1997; Barney, 1986, 1991; Hult, Ketchen, & Nichols, 2002; Gordon, 1985). This assertion is supported by various studies that have linked organizational culture to broad strategic outcomes such as an organization’s ability to manage knowledge (Davenport, Long, & Beers, 1998; Storck & Hill, 2000), innovation capability (Hauser, 1998), and strategic management of information technology (Kaarst-Brown & Robey, 1999; Reich & Benbasat, 2000; Schein, 1985). Based on this research, we suggest that there are characteristics of organizational cultures in information-based organizations that lead to increased collaboration, collegiality, and organizational effectiveness.

The present article explores these characteristics and examines whether organizational culture can be leveraged as a strategic asset to attract staff, create favorable assessments by administrators and funders, and cast library institutions in a positive light for independent media and accreditation bodies. We believe that identification of those characteristics of organizational cultures that are uniquely relevant to the growth and success of libraries can provide current and future library leaders with guidance, models, and intellectual resources to enhance personal and organizational success.

To begin, we provide an overview of the concept of organizational culture, before exploring in more detail the competing values framework (CVF) as a lens through which to view library cultures. We then apply the
key characteristics of the CVF to four prototypical library settings, before presenting our conclusions.

A Framework for Understanding Organizational Culture

Organizational Culture

The study of culture is specifically relevant to libraries because there has been significant restructuring of these institutions, particularly with respect to the span and scope of services offered. While there are several popular meanings attributed to the term “culture,” it is generally agreed in organizational research that culture is reflected in the practices, values, beliefs, and underlying assumptions of formal and informal groups (Frost, Moore, Louis, Lundberg, & Martin, 1991; Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1981, 1983; Schein, 1985). Schein’s (1985) summarized definition follows:

“Culture”: a pattern of basic assumptions— invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with 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. (Schein, 1985, p. 9)

Schein goes on to express his view that culture is a learned product of group experience. Culture is found, therefore, where there is a definable group with a significant history, regardless of the structural level of analysis. An organization’s culture is initially formed as a result of early experiences and the influence of early leaders. Over time, assumptions about how to operate become so implicitly imbedded in the underlying assumptions of action that they are difficult, if not impossible, to articulate. Libraries and other social institutions with centuries—and even millenniums—of history are subject to influences that go back far beyond the lifespan of their members. Paradoxically, despite the ephemeral nature of organizational culture, it is something to which newcomers become socialized, either directly through various artifacts such as the processes, rituals, and structures of the organization, or indirectly through espoused values and beliefs, language, and myths about past victories or failures (Louis, 1990).

Libraries play an important role in society. This role is increasingly challenged, however, in both private and government funding circles. Many corporate libraries did not survive the downsizing and cost cutting of the 1990s. The current decade has seen several large state libraries in the United States face substantial funding cuts and even threats of closure. We posit that it would be beneficial for libraries to understand the strengths of the underlying culture as well as the weaknesses. Doing so can assist libraries in adapting their action plans to address an increasingly volatile external
environment without losing the cultural values they hold as important to their identity and strategic strengths.

Diagnosing cultural characteristics is challenging. Schein (1985) argues that there are three levels to culture that interact: artifacts and creations, values, and basic assumptions (see Figure 1).

Schein’s level one, *artifacts and creations*, is the most visible level of culture because it is the constructed physical and social environment, including the language. The language of librarianship is always changing, the latest changes resulting from the advent of online searches, digital reference resources, and Internet databases, to name a few. In addition, the technology of most libraries has shifted from book-lined shelves and card catalogs to computer networks and multimedia resources. Many of the artifacts of libraries are a blending of old and new. Although technology is included at this level, Schein’s interpretation of artifacts is “the physical output of the group” rather than any reference to information technology itself. He stresses that, although insiders may not be aware of their own artifacts, they are observable to others. To develop understanding at this level, one can “attempt to analyze the central values that provide the day-to-day operating principles by which the members of the culture guide their behavior” (Schein, 1985, p. 15).

Level two focuses on *values*. Although this cultural level can provide insights into what insiders view as the *should’s* of the organization or unit, there can be conflicting interpretation of what the organizational values are. Schein (1985) indicates that if leaders communicate their values, and these values lead to success, then a process of cognitive transformation takes place. This process results in beliefs and then assumptions that are

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**Figure 1: Levels of Culture and their Interaction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artifacts and Creations</th>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Basic Assumptions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Testable in the physical environment</td>
<td>Relationship to environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>Testable only by social consensus</td>
<td>Nature of reality, time and space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visible and Audible Behavior Patterns</td>
<td>Greater level of awareness</td>
<td>Nature of human nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Preconscious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nature of human activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nature of human relationships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Adapted from Organizational Culture and Leadership (p.14), by E. H. Schein, 1985, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.*
unconscious and automatic. He further suggests that many values remain conscious, explicitly articulated, and form the normative guiding principles for groups. A library’s mission statement expressing principles of “user-friendly systems and fast, flexible service” is an example of this. Schein cautions that there can be a difference between deeper underlying assumptions and “espoused values,” which reflect either rationalizations or aspirations for the future (Schein, 1985).

Schein’s level three, basic assumptions, is equated to Argyris and Schön’s (1978) “theories-in-use.” Basic assumptions may be so implicit, taken for granted, and unconscious that surfacing them can require intensive interviewing and observation. “Yet when we do surface them, the cultural pattern suddenly clarifies and we begin to feel that we really understand what is going on and why” (Schein, 1985, p. 21).

Another aspect of cultural theory that appears particularly relevant to libraries is the concept of dominant or unitary organizational cultures versus subcultures that coexist with varying degrees of harmony or conflict (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Gregory, 1983; Martin, 1992). Deal and Kennedy (1982) were among the earliest authors to propose an integrated perspective of culture, identifying four distinct cultural patterns based on primary dimensions of risk-taking orientation and the speed/availability of feedback on actions. They proposed that the rituals, heroes, and practices of a dominant culture created a lack of legitimacy for alternative courses of action or cultural views. These early lessons learned about innovation and culture are important, and they argued that unless an organization already possessed a risk-taking, innovative quality in its culture, it would be difficult to engender it due to cultural resistance.

Libraries are often viewed through a stereotypical lens that might suggest the idea of a single, dominant, or strong culture; however, there is a large body of literature (Frost, et al. 1991; Kaarst-Brown & Robey, 1999; Martin, 1992; Meyerson & Martin, 1987) in other occupational domains that support multicultural frameworks. In particular, Martin’s (1992) view of unitary, differentiated, or fragmented organizational culture might provide insights to understanding the subcultures that may exist in academic libraries that are governed by both tenured librarians and unionized staff, as compared to those that serve business, not for profit, or governmental parent organizations. As an example, the unitary or integrationist view of culture focuses on an orientation to organization-wide consensus, consistency in cultural artifacts, and little if any cultural ambiguity. The differentiated view of organizational culture seeks subcultural consensus, may exhibit some inconsistency in its cultural artifacts, and tends to channel ambiguity outside of the main subculture. The view of organizational culture as fragmented reflects the challenges of achieving cultural consensus and exhibits a high level of acknowledgement and acceptance of cultural ambiguity. In the fragmented organizational culture, the cultural artifacts are neither clearly
consistent nor inconsistent, and newcomers or outsiders may have difficulty discerning a dominant culture other than the fact that great cultural diversity coexists (Frost, et al, 1991; Brown, 1995; Martin, 1992).

As noted by Sackmann (1991, 1992), occupational culture is in part determined by specialized training and knowledge sets. In addition to defining occupational boundaries, cultural knowledge can also define boundaries of affiliation, create barriers, or facilitate interaction and cooperation. As an example, occupational language and rituals associated with specialty fields such as medicine, library science, accounting, and others create bonds between those who share them and may exclude those who do not have knowledge of them. Lack of common cultural knowledge may negatively impact organizations because communication requires a common language about the business, as well as cultural commonality that underscores shared meaning (Barley, 1991; Sackmann, 1991, 1992; Schein, 1985, 1991; Smircich & Morgan, 1982).

A variety of strategies exist for understanding the cultures of organizations. For example, “The Balanced Scorecard,” an instrument developed by Kaplan and Norton (1992) that focuses on performance criteria, is gaining wide popularity in private institutions. It puts strategy and vision, rather than control, at the center of management. It also includes innovation and learning as one of the four key indicator groups of success, the others being financial measures, operational measures on customer satisfaction, and measures on internal processes. It looks at organizations from the perspective of the customer, the shareholder, and identifies what the organization excels at, while also analyzing whether it can continue to improve and create value (Kaplan & Norton, 1992). This strategy also is consistent with earlier findings by Deal and Kennedy (1982) on the relationship between cultural values and innovation orientation. Skyrme and Amidon (1998) provide evidence of firms, such as British Petroleum and Price Waterhouse, that measure innovation in terms of reduced cycle time, improved virtual teamwork to solve company problems more rapidly, and better ability to bring the best expertise to resolve customer problems. While these outcomes might be viewed as “softer” than economic measures, it is accepted that not all outcomes or strategic projects (such as knowledge management or cultural change) can be measured in financial terms (Skyrme & Amidon, 1998).

The Competing Values Framework as a Cultural Lens

To surface deep, underlying assumptions as proposed by Schein is an extensive, costly, and often time-consuming process that is far more than most small or large libraries would like to pursue. The competing values framework (CVF) (Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1981, 1983; Quinn & Kimberly, 1984; Cameron & Quinn, 1999) provides a validated and focused method that is consistent with Schein’s advice to analyze the central values of the organization. By considering both the cultural values in place and compar-
ing them to those preferred, the CVF similarly allows a comparison of the “should’s” with the desired state. Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1981, 1983) and Cameron and Quinn (1999) assert that the CVF is one strategy for examining the characteristics of an organizational culture that may impact its organizational effectiveness and success.

The CVF proposes that organizations reflect one or more of four cultural types: (a) clan, (b) hierarchy, (c) adhocracy, and (d) market. Before exploring these cultural types in more detail, we would like to briefly explain the basis for their development and definition. Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1981, 1983) developed the CVF framework from thirty indices measuring organizational effectiveness identified through a major review of the literature. Two independent panels were asked to reduce and organize the list of criteria in a two-stage process by applying four decision rules. Criteria were first eliminated if they were not at the organizational level of analysis, if they were not a singular index but a composite of several criteria, if they were not a construct but an operationalization, and if they were not a criterion of organizational performance. Two major dimensions and four main clusters emerged after the thirty indicators were submitted to a statistical multivariate ordering process. Through the use of multidimensional scaling, the most prominent criteria were located graphically on a three-dimensional spatial model, resulting in dimensions of organizational effectiveness that form the basis for delineating the four cultural types.

The first dimension of organizational effectiveness distinguishes criteria that stress flexibility, discretion, and dynamism from criteria that emphasize stability, order, and control. This means some organizations are effective when they are changing, adaptable, and organic, while others are effective when they are stable, predictable, and mechanistic. The second dimension discriminates between criteria that emphasize an internal orientation, integration, and unity from criteria that highlight an external orientation, differentiation, and rivalry. For example, some organizations are effective when they have a unified, congenial, internal culture, while others are perceived as effective when their culture emphasizes competition with others. The third dimension is reflective of the means-ends continuum that represents the contrast between organizational concerns for ends versus concerns for means (Cameron & Quinn, 1999, pp. 30–31; Faerman, 1993).

Based on these three dimensions, the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) was developed to diagnose six key aspects of organizational cultures or “cultural subsystems” (Cameron & Quinn, 1999). These subsystems are integrated by the CVF framework into the four theoretical culture types or archetypes of organizational effectiveness noted above. The four culture types are briefly described below in Figure 2. The OCAI permits organizations to easily analyze their current and preferred culture types using the main dimensions described above.
The characteristics used to classify cultural types result in an informative organizational profile based on current perceptions and desired preferences related to six “cultural subsystems” apparent at every institution. These criteria include:

1. **Dominant organizational characteristics**, which identify whether an organization is
   a) A very personal place like a family
   b) Entrepreneurial and risk taking
   c) Competitive and achievement oriented
   d) Controlled and structured
2. **Leadership style**, which can be described as
   a) Mentoring, facilitating, or nurturing
   b) Entrepreneurial, innovative, or risk taking
   c) No-nonsense, aggressive, results oriented
   d) Coordinating, organizing, efficiency oriented
3. **Management of employees**, which emphasizes
   a) Teamwork, consensus, and participation
   b) Individual risk taking, innovation, freedom, and uniqueness
   c) Competitiveness and achievement
   d) Security, conformity, predictability
4. **Organizational glue**, consisting of
   a) Loyalty and mutual trust
   b) Commitment to innovation and development

*Note. Adapted from Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework, by K. S. Cameron & R. E. Quinn, 1999, Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.*
c) Emphasis on achievement and goal accomplishment
d) Formal rules and policies

(5) Strategic emphasis on
a) Human development, high trust, openness
b) Acquisition of resources and creating new challenges
c) Competitive actions and winning
d) Permanence and stability

(6) Criteria for success, defined as
a) Development of human resources, teamwork, and concern for people
b) Having the most unique and newest products and services
c) Winning in the marketplace and outpacing the competition
d) Dependable, efficient, and low cost

These dimensions allow us to extend the settings in which the CVF framework has been applied to library institutions. For example, in applying the CVF framework to libraries and thinking about strategic emphasis, one might try to imagine any one institution as a mixture of one or more of the following dominant characteristics:

- This library emphasizes human development. High trust, openness, and participation persist. (Clan-oriented)
- This library emphasizes acquiring new resources and creating new challenges. Trying new things and prospecting for opportunities are valued. (Adhocracy-oriented)
- This library emphasizes competitive actions and achievement. Hitting stretch targets and winning points in our community are dominant. (Market-oriented)
- This library emphasizes permanence and stability. Efficiency, control, and smooth operations are important. (Hierarchy-oriented)

As these statements and the prior literature suggest, few institutions exist that represent a pure form of a single culture. At the same time, however, many leaders and staff members of library institutions would probably find that a few of these statements fit their organizations quite well, while other statements fit poorly. The CVF framework provides a basis for understanding the prevailing cultural conditions at an organization while simultaneously revealing whether conflicts exist between the apparent cultural values of leaders and managers and those enacted daily by staff and other stakeholders.

The following section reviews some of the key findings from CVF research that helped us further explore the strategic value of this model for library institutions.
Review of CVF Findings Relevant to Libraries

Several advantages accrue from using the CVF framework as a basis for examining the cultures of libraries. These include the fact that the CVF framework has been empirically validated in a variety of settings (Buenger, Daft, Conlon, & Austin, 1996; Goodman, Zammuto, & Gifford, 2001; Hooijberg & Petrock, 1993; Kalliath, Bluedorn, & Gillespie, 1999; Varner, 1996) and provides a body of empirical literature from which lessons can be learned in related contexts. The CVF has been applied and validated in both public and private organizations and in cross-cultural studies involving multiple countries. The competing values types have been linked to learning orientation (Berrio, 1999), quality of working life—including turnover, job satisfaction, empowerment, and job involvement (Goodman et al., 2001)—and as an aid in managing organizational change in libraries (Faerman, 1993). Sendelbach similarly found that organizations could use the CVF “as a common construct for examining different, complex issues and processes” (1993, p. 76).

Dellana and Hauser (1999) found that the CVF could be linked to specific criteria for the widely prized Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award for excellence in practices, identifying that “higher Baldrige scores tend to be significantly related to the adhocracy and group (clan) cultural types” (p. 11). Criteria for the award consist of seven categories, including leadership, information and analysis, strategic quality planning, human resource development and management, management of process quality and operational results, and customer focus and satisfaction (NIST, 1994). The framework proposed can also provide indications of overall satisfaction with existing cultural archetypes versus preferred cultural archetypes (Cameron & Quinn, 1999; Varner, 1996).

One of the insights for libraries in terms of culture as a strategic resource is the finding that certain CVF cultural types may be more desired by employees. Despite cuts in funding and the related downsizing of many libraries, there is always a need to attract and retain valued employees. We cannot generalize and say that good people will find work anywhere, but when the going gets tough, as it has in many library settings, the best people can more easily find employment elsewhere (Blair, 2000; Helfer, 1998; MacLeod, Gray, & Freidenrich, 1997; Quint, 1999). Research on the four cultural types offers some useful insights into attracting and retaining quality people in even more challenging settings than libraries.

Goodman, Zammuto, and Gifford (2001) studied 276 nurses in hospital settings and found that the group-oriented clan culture was positively correlated with organizational commitment, job involvement, empowerment, and job satisfaction. As can be expected, under these conditions turnover intentions were low. They similarly found support for lower organizational commitment, job involvement, empowerment, and satisfaction in hierarchy cultures. They also found, however, that control-flexibility elements of the
competing values framework were more important than the internal-external elements.

While testing the value of the competing values framework in public, not-for-profit university setting, Berrio (1999) sought to understand the best way to achieve Senge’s (1990) goal of becoming an effective learning organization. He found that to become a more effective and efficient learning organization the organization as a whole also needed to develop a stronger clan culture. The clan culture values would provide a more supportive environment for innovation and risk taking in a traditionally stable, non-risk-taking environment. One might hypothesize that a library would need to be more market oriented, but this might not be the case. This again supports the value of understanding the key characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses of libraries’ existing cultures if they are to adapt and succeed in today’s more volatile environment.

One example of the benefits of cultural understanding for libraries is found in a study by Varner (1996). Varner used the CVF to diagnose the culture of an academic library as a means of understanding how new action strategies could be developed. A questionnaire based on the competing values framework was used to survey staff and faculty, thereby providing a profile of the library’s overall organizational culture and its subcultures. One of the advantages was that using the CVF provided the library with insights into their operations in a way that was not focused on deficiencies or problems. Rather, the library found that the results provided opportunities for dialogue around current strategies, changes in their environment, and how new approaches might compete with existing ones but could produce positive new directions.

Buenger, Daft, Conlon, and Austin (1996) found that an organization’s value set is particularly predictable based on contextual values, meaning that value sets differ from unit to unit. Certain patterns of values appear to exist within particular environmental and technological contexts, and these values further influence how an organization is structured. With the emerging challenges of new technology and increased private competition, as well as new structural forms such as digital libraries, libraries are not only facing increasingly dynamic contextual influences on their cultural values, but these values may be in conflict with the traditional structures. While one interpretation is an increase in cultural conflict, an alternative view, based on application of the competing values framework, found that all four of the cultural types could coexist among different groups within an organization. As an example, in a study of 141 randomly selected companies, firms tended to have a mix of two to four of the cultural types (Al-Khalifa & Aspinwall, 2001). This raises the question of differentiation or fragmentation of library cultures and an increased need to manage potentially competing cultural value sets if libraries are to retain professionally diverse and skilled staff and still meet the needs of their constituents.
Although most members of the public probably think of libraries as the little brick building in the heart of their community or the big brick building in the center of a campus, these notions greatly oversimplify the types and missions of libraries found today. Most large commercial organizations have dedicated in-house library operations, as do schools, nongovernmental organizations, and local, state, and federal government agencies. With the increasing use of the Internet and the World Wide Web, digital libraries have burgeoned, and these serve a huge variety of different user audiences. For example, a library’s constituency may include people interested in health and medicine, industry and world news, law, and business. In this increasingly competitive environment, a library’s organizational culture indeed might become the strategic advantage when competing with other stakeholders for dwindling resources by offering innovative, specialized, and value-added services to their customers. Examples are document delivery, digitization of older materials, instruction in search strategies for specific academic research, and verification of authenticity of sources, to name just a few.

In the following section, we apply the competing values framework to several common library types to further explore the strategic insights to be gained.

Seeking a Match between Mission and Culture: An Application of the CVF to Several Prototypical Library Types

Although we cannot hope to cover all of the types of libraries, in this section we apply the main concepts of the competing values framework to four prototypical library types: academic libraries, public libraries, small institutional libraries, and the emerging digital library. These libraries will be discussed using the six dimensions of the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument developed by Cameron & Quinn (1999): dominant characteristics of the organization, organizational leadership, management of employees, organizational glue, strategic emphases, and criteria of success. As a caveat, it must be mentioned that this exploration is based on generalizations. Therefore, individual libraries should use these descriptions as templates that can be adjusted to fit their own situation in order to better understand their organization.

Academic Libraries

Academic libraries are part of universities or colleges, and thus many of the organizational components of them are based on organizational aspects of higher education institutions. Because of this, academic libraries tend to be the most formal library organizations among the traditional library types, at least on the macro level. Traditionally these libraries were departmentalized and tended to be heavily structured, although individual departments may have been fairly flat.
In the past there were at least two levels of leadership in academic libraries—departmental managers and library administration. The departmental managers were usually librarians with considerable experience who were entrusted with developing and managing the policies within their department. Therefore, while they were responsible for the success of their department, they were given wide latitude as to how that success could be accomplished. Universities have a significant split in staffing between the faculty and staff. Since many academic libraries mirror the staffing levels of their parent organization, this encourages the professional/paraprofessional split in the library. This encouragement may be formalized through membership for one or both groups—librarians may be able to achieve tenure, and paraprofessionals may be unionized. Many times the result has been a segregated policy structure; librarians make decisions based upon their professional expertise, while those in staff roles follow structured policies.

Customarily, the organization is held together in several ways. In most cases the staff has pride in and loyalty for the institution, as school spirit can bring together the library staff around athletic events and other events, such as graduation. In addition, the managers were tasked with managing conflict in their department, leaving the interdepartmental struggles to the senior management and administration.

As in the past, the strategic emphasis of the academic library is multifaceted, but the primary mission is to ensure that the needs of the students and faculty are met. Therefore, exploration of new services and evolution of current services are limited by the library’s responsibility to the community. Change happens slowly because of the academic environment and often meets with resistance from faculty who are set in their ways. Most innovation tends to occur during the summer months when the impact of failure is much lower.

Dependable support from the parent organization was the basis for success of the academic library. If the library was perceived as not meeting the information needs of the academic community, then the library failed as an organization. In this way, the library was like a utility that either met demand and succeeded or did not meet demand and failed. The library as an organization may have judged its own success through new programs and initiatives, interesting speakers, activities, and displays, and use of services; however, the community that is served by the academic library might be more interested in nothing more than dependable service. It is critical that each individual library identify outcomes that are important to the parent organization, as there is no generalizable standard for academic library performance (ACRL, 1998).

Therefore, in the scope of the competing values framework, the academic library of the past emphasized stability and control above all and internal focus and integration secondarily. This management style is appropriate when change is incremental; however, many factors have and are
dramatically impacting this stability and status quo. Among these factors are rapid technological changes, new budgetary constraints and competition, demands for measurable service outcomes, increasing diversity of employees, and greater span of controls. As a result, academic library leaders and employees are looking for new organizational models and cultures that encourage empowerment, flexibility, and discretion in order to keep up with uncertain times. As Edwards (1997) argues, directors and managers of academic libraries feel constrained in the typical hierarchical structure of higher education. These management structures do not allow them to shift their library’s services quickly enough to account for the rapid changes in information technologies (Edwards, 1997).

Thus the traditional hierarchical values have become dysfunctional and need to be replaced by more clan and/or adhocracy frameworks. These two management frameworks would allow academic libraries the flexibility needed in different ways. The clan-based framework would encourage smaller teams to form around certain tasks. Instead of having technical services separated from public services, this clan framework would encourage groups of individuals to be assigned to teams based around types of information sources or services. Then, if there is a change in a particular technology, the team can adjust much more quickly than if changes have to work their way through hierarchical management levels.

The adhocracy framework would encourage risk taking and entrepreneurship; library managers could empower some teams to keep the “utility” of the library running, while other teams could then explore ways of introducing new information technologies into the existing offerings. When combined with the clan framework, the resulting workplace would be more dynamic and able to respond to rapid change, but by using teams to determine the changes, the diversity offered through a work group would be utilized in offering new services.

Public Libraries

Public libraries are not tied as closely to a specific institution as academic libraries are, and therefore, they do not have as many generalizations about their organizations. These libraries support the needs of their local communities, and thus the collections, services, and policies reflect the communities and local boards of directors that they serve. Smaller public libraries may only have a few staff members and volunteers and thus be run like a small family, while larger libraries can mirror academic libraries in their formal, departmentalized structure and the need for culture changes. The split between librarians and paraprofessional staff is usually not as pronounced as in academic libraries, as there is no associated split in a parent organization.

The leadership of a public library is focused on presenting library patrons with a combination of services and materials that they want and
demand, balanced with services and materials that they need and should have. Unlike a commercial organization focused on selling to the customer what they will buy, the public library has to balance the voiced demand of a subset of the patronage with the needs of many, increasingly diverse groups of patrons. To accomplish this, the management style tends to be more team oriented and involves more of the library staff in order to introduce more viewpoints in the decision-making process.

The glue that holds the organization together is pride in serving the local community and the dependability of jobs. Many public library staff are actually city or county employees and carry the stability and pay of a civil servant job. Promotions also may be tied into the same promotion schedule as other civil servants. In many public libraries, however, the head librarian is an appointed political position, and the library board is elected or appointed and may change, which can cause a rapid shift in the organizational and political tenor of the library. Like the academic library, the public library is seen as a utility; therefore, dependably resolving the information needs for the community is the top priority.

As the patron needs change, the library services must also change. Some effort, therefore, is spent understanding the patronage of the library. To meet needs, libraries may provide informational works, public meeting spaces, interesting programs, or material delivery services. Outreach programs are constantly redeveloped to meet the changing needs of the populace. The library’s success is measured by the patrons who are touched by their services. Therefore, a successful library is one that is integrated into the community and is seen as an essential component of the services offered to citizens.

Public libraries have to balance flexibility with stability. Flourishing public library cultures are those that are more flexible in order to meet the needs of the patrons. Public libraries that focus too much on maintaining a static organization may not be able to meet the demands of the taxpayers. This flexibility, however, is usually at the level of the organization and not the individual; teams and committees work to make changes in library services. The focus of public libraries tends to be more external rather than internal, especially when the library is turning to the taxpayer for more resources through a vote. Therefore, successful public libraries are likely to strive for a clan culture, with some undertones of adhocracy through empowered committees.

Small Institutional Libraries

The category of small institutional libraries covers many school and special libraries. Conceptually, these libraries have a small staff and answer to a larger parent institution but are organizationally independent. A very small staff frequently runs these libraries; there may be only one librarian and perhaps a few assistants. The librarian operates under policies set by
the parent organization and must answer directly to the needs of the parent organization; this can cause dramatic swings in collection policy and areas of expenditure when the library must change to meet the needs of a rapidly changing parent organization. Outside of organizational procedures, however, these librarians have considerable flexibility in how they perform their tasks. Trust and openness are important between library staff members in small libraries.

These libraries have to be very outward focused. In order to succeed in the parent organization, they need to make sure they meet the needs and are visible and esteemed members of the organization. Success is judged by the repeated use of library services. Failure to meet the needs of the members of the organization can result in library budgets being severely reduced in lean times.

There are some differences between library types in this category. The amount of job security varies greatly and affects the aggressiveness required by the library. A corporate library must take risks and be seen as an asset to the company in order to survive lean times. A school library, conversely, is a required component for schools and will therefore survive; the staff of these libraries may then choose to enjoy the stability and simply meet the expressed needs of the faculty and students instead of actively pursuing patrons.

Therefore, the type of culture exhibited in these libraries depends upon the setting. Most small libraries allow their staff a high amount of flexibility and, therefore, rely upon their professional staff’s judgment to accomplish tasks. These libraries need to develop either the clan culture or the adhocracy culture, depending upon how much focus they place on the external needs of the organization over the internal needs of the library and how much they must do to remain in existence.

Introducing Digital Libraries

Many libraries have introduced digital library services to supplement their existing services. In addition, stand-alone digital library sources and services have appeared. These consist of nonprofit institutions and for-profit organizations such as those that create Web search tools that offer direct competition to traditional libraries for digital information seekers. Many of these for-profit services have a very different managerial focus, and libraries wishing to compete will have to consider adjusting their organizations in order to be successful.

The one cultural archetype not yet discussed is the market culture. Because traditional libraries had their primary patronage defined as those people who were members of a defined community or organization and most library services had to be used in person, libraries did not have to compete. Most patrons had a choice of only a few services, and the decision usually came down to either convenience or the type of information
needed. With the advent of the Internet, however, physical location does not matter for digital library services, and patrons have the choice of many more sources to have their information needs met. The library is just one more Web search tool to many users. Therefore, aspects of the market culture, such as the focus on market share, market leadership, and competition, are essential for libraries wishing to offer competitive digital library services.

One option for libraries that wish to maintain a more traditional organization is to create a flexible suborganization responsible for the digital library services. This group would, in essence, be its own library and would be able to take risks, change their structure, develop their own measures for success, and be freed from a more traditional hierarchical structure. Burd (2003) reported that librarians are more satisfied and committed to a library organization that exhibits many of these aspects. The downside to this concept is the library may see a loss of clan culture, as part of the organization will be seen differently not only by patrons but also by administration; in addition, staff members on both sides of the organization may find reason for complaint. Additional culture conflict may hamper maintenance of collegiality and result in the loss of the creative potential of different cultural values.

Traditional libraries may not see the need to compete with these for-profit services. Many of these libraries succeed based upon measurable use of their services and the perception of value of library services. As more people turn to the for-profit information services and away from the library, traditional usage numbers will decrease. A library then must decide to either compete with the for-profit information services (moving toward the market culture) or to change their organization and focus on other types of services, such as programs, education, and outreach (staying in a clan culture). Either way, the little brick building on the corner can no longer afford to remain static in its offerings and, therefore, cannot remain static in its organizational structure or complacent about its culture.

**Conclusion**

This article explores the applicability of the four cultural types of the competing values framework to libraries so that their organizational culture can be leveraged as a strategic asset to attract staff, create favorable assessments by administrators and funders, and cast library institutions in a positive light for independent media and accreditation bodies. There is enough evidence from the organizational culture and general CVF studies to support the argument that culture can illuminate critical characteristics of an organization’s culture or subculture. In addition, the CVF framework has already proved useful in library, public, and private settings for understanding and guiding culture change (Faerman, 1993; Varner, 1996). The view proposed by Barney (1986) of culture as a strategic resource is that it is unique and hard to imitate. The competing values framework suggests
that there are four distinct yet definable and standard culture types. What we hope our discussion has presented, however, is that the strategic aspect is in understanding the culture’s fit with organizational contexts and the need to evaluate how to keep what is valued while adapting and changing with the dynamics of the external environment.

Specifically, libraries in transition can use the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument to determine the current perceptions of their organizational cultures and identify the types of culture leaders want to create to increase organizational effectiveness in a turbulent environment. The instrument is also helpful in determining employee preferences in regards to work cultures and starting the dialog on how a preferred culture might be implemented. In addition, the OCAI provides the means to assess the skills of library leaders and managers who plan to engage in a culture change and if necessary provide staff development and training to facilitate success.

The conditions (indicators) that could trigger such an assessment include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. A change in leadership after years of relative stability. Leadership changes bring with them new expectations from employees, customers, managers, and resource providers. The OCAI is a means to prepare organizational members for the stresses and opportunities that arise from implementation of change and provide them with a voice in selecting the preferred futures.

2. A library suffers major budget cuts while simultaneously experiencing the increased expectation for proliferating information in a variety of formats. The competition for shrinking resources is driving the demand for fiscal responsibility and budgetary accountability in most academic and municipal institutions. At the same time, information has become an important societal commodity that commands escalating prices as well as various delivery methods. In order to satisfy the demands for expensive materials, library managers and leaders need to carefully and strategically deploy their human resources budgets to achieve effective as well as efficient services. The OCAI can detect dysfunctional departmental or institutional cultures and can be used to develop people as change agents as well as create supportive environments.

3. Changing demographics call for different managerial skill sets. To maximize the opportunities for better services created by a diverse labor force, library managers and employees require training and development to cope with increased empowerment, conflicts, and communication demands. The OCAI is an instrument that can reveal underlying cultural assumptions that might derail or sabotage a library’s emerging consensus or vision for the future.

4. Libraries are service organizations; as such, they do not create budgetary resources but consume them. Consequently, they have to constantly
justify their expenditures and demonstrate high organizational performance. Interactions with library employees and customers are crucial indicators used to judge commitment, productivity, effectiveness, and service orientation. The OCAI can, again, be used to measure critical organizational criteria that might impact perceptions of users positively or negatively.

This article has important implications for the leadership of libraries. Organizational cultures and values are important resources that need to be managed like other resources. Their management assists in developing group perceptions, coordinating group activities and decision-making, and balancing individual and organizational interests. A cultural assessment can help in articulating a clear mission and can serve to align diverse intra-organizational cultures while facilitating change and organizational transformations. Cameron and Quinn (1999) discovered in the organizations they studied that the highest-performing leaders had developed the capacity to lead in each of the four cultural types, meaning that they had the ability to move an organization from one type to another in order to align it with changing environmental conditions. In addition, leaders who are behaviorally complex are perceived as more effective by both subordinates and superiors. The OCAI provides library leaders and managers with the tools to assess their skills and improve their personal effectiveness in facilitating organizational culture change.

Library education can support the ability of library leaders to perform this important organizational work by creating awareness in all students about the need for continued improvement and providing them with the tools for accepting change as inevitable and invigorating. Part of library education should be devoted to developing change agents by providing leadership training and continuing education opportunities for librarians who assume managerial and leadership positions. In addition, experiences of cultural change in the private and public sector can be shared through research and publication in the library literature.

Changing an organization’s culture is not a quick fix but a multiyear process. Research opportunities are created by periodically assessing progress in the implementation of a new organizational vision. Such assessments provide feedback to all participants, chances for discussions and corrections, if necessary, and stories of successes to be shared with internal as well as external constituents. They will build pride in newly discovered abilities for personal and organizational change and infuse library staff and leadership with the energy required to take on the next challenges of continuing improvement.
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NOTES
1. An effective learning organization is conceptualized as one in which the members continually acquire, shape, and use new knowledge to adapt to an ever-changing environment (Senge, 1990).

REFERENCES


Transitioning to the Learning Organization

JOAN GIESECCE AND BETH MCNEIL

ABSTRACT
Peter Senge popularized the concept of the learning organization, and several libraries have tried, with varying degrees of success, to adopt the learning organization model. This article explores why organizations consider attempting to become learning organizations, includes an overview of the theory of learning organizations, presents steps to becoming a learning organization, and describes examples of learning organization efforts at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Libraries and other libraries.

LEARNING ORGANIZATIONS
To survive in the continuously changing information environment, libraries must find ways to become agile, flexible organizations. Rigid rules, entrenched bureaucracies, and stable hierarchies will not help these organizations survive new technologies, tight budgets, competition, and changing expectations of patrons and users. Stifling bureaucracies can result in employees who are unmotivated, lack the skills needed to adjust to changes, are content to follow orders, lack problem solving skills, and develop an us vs. them mentality. To advance, libraries need to move away from being knowing organizations that emphasize one best way to do things by following rules and regulations. They need to move past being understanding organizations where organizational culture and values dominate decision-making so that change is unlikely to occur. They need to advance past thinking organizations that emphasize fixing and solving problems without questioning why the system broke. Instead, they must become organizations that create a climate
that fosters learning, experimenting, and risk taking. Instead of emphasizing command and control processes, libraries need to adopt strategies that will help the organization move forward and develop proactive responses to change. They need employees who appreciate change, accept challenges, can develop new skills, and are committed to the organization’s mission, goals, and objectives.

The concepts of the learning organization can provide leaders, managers, and staff with the tools they need to develop organizations that can succeed in turbulent times. Learning organizations encourage their members to improve their skills so they can learn and develop. The staff become more flexible as they acquire knowledge and are more able to move around the organization. Interunit barriers are lessened as staff share experiences, knowledge, and skills. Creativity can flourish as staff are encouraged to take risks and try new things. Traditional communication barriers are also lessened as communication is encouraged between units and between staff levels. A rigid hierarchy no longer exists and no longer prevents change. New problems and new challenges can be met faster and resolved more quickly. And, most importantly, for today’s librarians the customer or patron is the first priority for the organization. Good customer service becomes the foundation for all the organization needs to do.

**DEFINING THE LEARNING ORGANIZATION**

What is a learning organization? A learning organization is an organization skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge and at modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights. Without accompanying changes in the way that work gets done, only the potential for improvement exists. Learning organizations translate new knowledge into new ways of behaving. In a learning organization, managers and staff encourage work-related learning, the exchange of information between employees to create new ideas and knowledge, and continuous improvement. Staff test experiences and use those experiences to improve the organization. Flexibility becomes a core value of the organization as staff accept and adapt new ideas and seek ways to enhance products and services. In a learning organization, people are appreciated for their skills, values, and work. Staff opinions are sought and are treated with respect. Exchanging information and sharing ideas and experiences throughout the organization is encouraged. People learn new skills they can apply to their jobs. They use these skills to enhance services and improve the organization. There are more opportunities for staff to be creative, to learn from mistakes, to take risks, and to reach new levels of expertise. In a learning organization, learning takes place at the individual, group, and organizational levels.

People in organizations experience two types of learning: maintenance learning and anticipatory learning. Maintenance learning is discovering better ways to do current procedures and tasks. Maintenance learning is
important in that it ensures that procedures and processes are efficient and being done the best way possible. Maintenance learning has a short-term focus, however, and often misses changes in the environment.

A learning organization encourages anticipatory learning. Here individuals acquire new knowledge and incorporate the new knowledge into the workplace so that the organization can reach its vision. Anticipatory learning is participatory, a joint venture in which individuals in a unit, department, or the organization as a whole explore alternatives, share ideas, and consider how new knowledge helps the organization reach its goals. To succeed, today’s libraries need to emphasize anticipatory learning so that the organization can adjust to changing environments and reach the vision of the library of the future.

Why is it so difficult to foster learning in an organization? To answer that question, it is helpful to review the work Organization Learning, by Chris Argyris and Donald Schön (1978). In their theory on organizations, they describe learning as detecting and correcting errors (Senge, 2003, p. 47). Error correction is a very personal process. To correct an error, an individual must admit that he/she made a mistake. A manager has to admit that he/she is not infallible. The manager risks losing credibility. In most of our organizations, mistakes are viewed as personal failings to be fixed. Many performance evaluation systems emphasize error rates and limiting the number of mistakes, further creating a culture where denying errors is in the individual’s best interest.

To succeed and grow, however, organizations must change this culture so that successes are emphasized and rewarded. Errors become opportunities to find better ways to accomplish tasks. Failures can become opportunities to learn and improve rather than career-ending events.

Learning, then, is about action. It is about taking the information we gather and using it to create knowledge management systems and statistical databases and then using that knowledge to improve the organization. Learning is about moving from data gathering to using data to effect needed changes. Effective learning is about communication, communicating about errors and failures, analyzing why systems fail, and using that information to make changes. In learning organizations individuals move from fearing mistakes to using problems and errors as information to inform decision-making, improve processes, and create success.

**The Fifth Discipline**

Peter Senge, in his book The Fifth Discipline (1990a), outlines five component technologies or disciplines that are the foundation for building a learning organization. These five disciplines are: shared vision, personal mastery, mental models, group learning, and systems thinking. Senge’s treatment of each discipline includes practices, underlying principles, and
the understanding of the discipline when one has achieved the highest levels of mastery (1990a, p. 6–11).

According to Senge, personal mastery is the discipline of continually clarifying and deepening our personal vision, of focusing our energies, of developing patience, and of seeing reality objectively (1990a, p. 7). In personal mastery one focuses on results while seeing the current reality. Understanding the creative tension between the current reality and the future goal is a key part of personal mastery. As one masters this discipline, one can see the connectedness in the organization between individual learning and organizational learning and the commitment of both the individual and the organization to organizational success. Personal mastery goes beyond rote learning. In personal mastery we may learn a new skill and learn how applying that skill to our work can move the organization forward. For example, learning to use an online chat reference service involves mastering the technology and understanding the mechanics of answering questions. In a learning organization staff will not stop at just learning the mechanics. They will also look at how an online chat reference service fits in with the entire array of reference services and how to best integrate this service with other services, including circulation and interlibrary loan activities.

Mental models refers to the assumptions and generalizations that influence how one understands and interprets the organization (Senge, 1990a, p. 8). Very often, we are not aware of our own mental models and the assumptions that underlie our actions. We act based on our subconscious model rather than on the theories we claim to believe. In learning about mental models, we need to turn inward, unearth the assumptions that guide our actions, examine those assumptions, and learn to think openly about our view of the world. As we look at our mental models we can begin to change them to develop a set of mental models shared by the team, work group, or organization. As we learn to unearth our mental models we can look more creatively at what can and cannot be done in our organization. We will not be limited by past assumptions and can look for more creative ways to address problems, find solutions, and change efforts. For example, in a library system with branch libraries, branch staff may have a mental model of the organization in which the main library is viewed as unsupportive. If branch staff believe main library staff do not respect their work, then branch staff may view any offer of assistance from the main library as a criticism of their work. In contrast, main library staff may think they are being supportive team members by offering assistance and will be surprised by the hostile response to their offer of help. These conflicting mental images of the library system can lead to conflict and create distrust. In a learning organization, staff would recognize these different views and develop a shared understanding of how to work together to make the organization stronger.

A shared vision makes it possible for members of the organization to
understand the future its leaders want to create (Senge, 1990a, p. 9). The leadership of the organization cannot dictate a shared vision. Instead, the vision develops from many people within the organization creating a picture of the future. All members of the organization must understand and contribute to the vision. The vision has to be meaningful to them and be something that relates to their individual visions of the organization. By working together to create the vision and then working to incorporate that vision into each unit or part of the organization, we can create a focus for the organization that will guide all parts of the organization. For example, if the library has as part of its shared vision of the future the seamless integration of print and electronic information, then a cataloging department will design a catalog that enables patrons to access both print and electronic information using the same system. Reference services will look for ways to implement an integrated information commons so patrons can use print and electronic resources together and can get assistance with all formats at one desk. With such a shared vision, the different units in the library will look for ways to complement each other’s activities and truly collaborate to make the library more effective.

Team learning is another key component of the learning organization because teams are the fundamental learning unit (Senge, 1990a, p. 10). In team learning, members of the group must learn to suspend assumptions about how things are done and must act as colleagues, putting aside individual defensiveness to create an open environment for dialog and discussion. Working together as a team can produce more than the individual members can by themselves. Teams that do not promote learning, however, will not be as productive or as successful as those that are open to new ideas and work together to achieve their goals and objectives.

The fifth discipline that helps bring the concepts of the learning organization together is that of systems thinking (Senge, 1990a, p. 6). Systems thinking is the ability to see the bigger picture, to see the interrelationships of a system, to move beyond a simple cause and effect approach to seeing continuous processes. In systems thinking we move from seeing the individual parts of a system to understanding that the system is the interactions of those parts. Systems thinking brings the other four disciplines of a learning organization together in an integrated approach to examining and improving the organization.

Using systems thinking an organization can begin to see that familiar solutions no longer solve problems, that cause and effect are not closely related in time and space, that small changes can lead to big results, and that there is no blame. The individual, the cause of the problem, and the solution to the problem are all part of the same system. By looking at the system as a whole, we can begin to see new opportunities for solving problems and for implementing change.
ROLE OF LEADERS IN THE LEARNING ORGANIZATION

The roles of leaders in organizations as designers, teachers, and stewards take on new meaning in a learning organization (Senge, 1990b, p. 10–13). As designers, leaders are responsible for building a foundation of core values and organizational purpose. They are also responsible for ensuring that policies, strategies, and structure support core values and can be used to translate core values into business decisions. For example, if quality customer service is a core value, then policies need to reflect this value and should focus on customer service. Policies that simplify the process of renewing books online, for example, supports this core value of the organization. Policies that require patrons to follow arcane bureaucratic procedures would not support the core value. Leaders are responsible for evaluating organizational policies and strategies to be sure they have designed an organization that supports the core value of quality customer service.

The second role of leaders is that of teacher. This is not the authoritarian teacher of the past. It is not the model of the “sage on the stage.” Rather, in a learning organization the leader serves as a coach, “guiding from the side” to help people in the organization surface mental models, identify underlying assumptions, see patterns of behavior, and develop systems thinking approaches to problem solving. As a guide, leaders encourage growth, development, and true learning rather than emphasizing memorization of policies and blind application of procedures.

The third role of leaders is that of steward. Leaders are the stewards of the mission of the library. They are responsible for protecting the mission and ensuring that organizational values are understood and practiced. Leaders’ commitment to the higher purpose of the organization, to ethical behavior, and to supporting the members of the organization are all crucial aspects of the stewardship role. Without the commitment to maintaining the ethical core of the organization, leaders will be unable to create the culture of a learning organization.

CREATING THE LEARNING ORGANIZATION

To implement a learning organization, libraries need to build a foundation based on an awareness of learning and create an environment that encourages openness. The organization’s leaders must be committed to the concepts of a learning organization, be willing to share power with employees, and be committed to promoting learning.

A first step in building this foundation is to understand how organizations learn. To begin the learning cycle, one first needs to be aware of the need to learn. With awareness, individuals can start to see the underlying structures of the organization and understand what forces are driving behavior. Employees can achieve this understanding by testing mental models, listening, and looking at data. Once employees begin to see the structure
of the organization, they can begin dialogues with team members about the patterns of meaning they find in the organization. They can develop an awareness of what is possible rather than being limited to what they currently know. From awareness they can begin to develop the skills and capabilities needed for change. They can begin to change because they want to change, not because they have been told they have to change. The organization begins to develop a shared vision of the future that will guide their efforts and the learning opportunities. They can begin to reflect on what they know and what they assume about the organization. As staff define their mental models they can begin to unearth assumptions that may be holding them back. Staff can create new conceptualizations of the organization and not be limited by past behavior. Finally, staff will begin to change their values and beliefs. They can let go of the belief that they need to be in control to be effective and learn to deal with ambiguity and uncertainty as forces that can help them be creative. Members of the organization can develop confidence in their teams, in their staff, in their fellow employees, and in their leaders. They can move from accidental strategies that promote learning to declared strategies that explicitly address the concepts of the learning organization.

**Strategies for Becoming a Learning Organization**

What kinds of strategies will help us become a learning organization? What steps can be taken to change our culture, vision, goals, and objectives to embrace learning as the foundation of what we do?

*Commit to Change*

First, an understanding that a learning organization is one that will thrive on change is necessary. Library staff cannot be afraid of changes or move halfheartedly along the path of learning. To become a learning organization we need to make a commitment to changing what we do and how we do it. All staff need to reframe their views of the organization, looking at problems from different angles and asking “what if” instead of talking about why the organization cannot succeed. The change process must be driven from the top levels of the organization. Managers must lead the change with a positive attitude and a clear vision.

*Connect Learning with the Organization’s Operations*

Managers need to connect learning to the business operations. A learning organization is not about promoting learning for the sake of learning. It is about promoting learning to improve work processes and enhance services.

*Assess Organizational Capability*

An assessment of how well the organization can address the five disciplines is needed. Does the organization have the technology, people,
and knowledge necessary to encourage learning? Is the library prepared to provide the training necessary to teach people the skills they need to succeed?

**Communicate the Vision of a Learning Organization**

To succeed in making substantial changes in the organization, everyone needs to understand and commit to the vision of a learning organization. People need to understand the five disciplines of the learning organization and how they can practice these new skills.

**Demonstrate and Model a Commitment to Learning**

Organizations need to communicate the learning cycle by taking action, reviewing the action, evaluating the experience, and using the evaluation to plan the next steps. By understanding that learning is a continuous process and that individuals and groups learn from their mistakes, the library can encourage and support individual and team learning. The organization also needs an explicit plan for encouraging learning. Enhanced staff development programs, individual learning plans, and support for classes and workshops are among the tools an organization uses to model learning.

**Cut Bureaucracy and Streamline Structure**

Learning organizations are not likely to succeed in a top-down hierarchical organization. Flat structures that encourage interdepartmental activities and communication will promote learning. Limiting bureaucratic procedures will help promote creativity, encourage problem solving, and encourage thinking rather than mindless obedience to rules.

**Capture Learning and Share Knowledge**

Learning organizations succeed when knowledge is shared. Learning at all levels of the organization will encourage personal growth and mastery. Sharing that knowledge will allow the organization to benefit from individual and group learning and will promote growth and change.

**Reward Learning**

In addition to promoting and supporting learning, the organization must reward learning in order to succeed. Performance appraisals should include rewards for developing new skills, for teamwork, and for continuous personal development that supports organizational goals. When learning is rewarded people are more likely to adopt behaviors that support and promote learning activities.

**Learn More about Learning Organizations**

The concept of the learning organization is constantly developing. Learning organizations are not only about learning within the organization but also about improving and enhancing the concept of the learning organization. Staff need to look for ways to improve their understanding of learning as they are enhancing their own organization.
Continuously Adapt, Improve, and Learn

Achievement of the learning organization is a continuous process of growth, change, and improvement. The organization becomes stronger as it changes, meets new challenges, incorporates new technologies, provides enhanced services, and meets the challenge of an ever-changing information environment.

Learning Organization Experiences

How can a library take the concepts of a learning organization and turn them into a practical strategy for managing the operation? Reports in the literature provide some advice to organizations considering the learning organization model. Still, the literature on learning organizations in the library and information science field varies in content. Some articles describe libraries as learning organizations in theory, and others question whether college or university libraries can become learning organizations (Rowley, 1997; Marcum, 1996). Articles question whether the library as a learning organization is just the next fad for the field (Worrell, 1995). Editorials in College and Research Libraries and Research Strategies challenge readers to commit to making the library a learning organization and ask whether some libraries might already be learning organizations (Riggs, 1997; Wittkopf, 1995). Most of these articles discuss learning organizations and libraries in general rather than providing specific examples. Little information in print exists regarding particular libraries and their efforts at becoming learning organizations. A few articles can be found on learning organization efforts at the University of Arizona (Bender, 1997), the North Suburban Library System (Hayes, Sullivan, & Baaske, 1999), and a pilot collaborative collections management project for California academic libraries organized by the University of California and Stanford University libraries (Hightower & Soete, 1995). Some library Web sites (for example, that of the University of Maryland Libraries) include information about efforts to become a learning organization (Baughman & Hubbard, 2001). Additionally, Maryland’s Web site includes criteria for assessment of the learning organization effort and content areas for a learning and education program related to the learning organization philosophy.

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln Experience

The move to a learning organization at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Libraries (UNL) began in 1996. The dean of the Libraries, with strong support from the Libraries’ administrative committee, led the effort. The Libraries built this effort on a long-standing foundation of planning that included the development of a vision statement and creation of strategic goals and objectives. To begin the move toward a learning organization, the Libraries refreshed the vision statement and simplified it to “seamless integration of print and electronic information in a flexible environment.”
In developing a shared understanding of the vision, the vision statement was expanded to include information and services. The understanding is that the Libraries are working to integrate new technologies, formats, and services into the whole organization in order to meet patron needs rather than establishing new, separate units to handle electronic information and services. In this vision no staff member or librarian would be left behind in a marginalized unit. Everyone needed to be a part of the vision, working to move the Libraries forward.

Once the vision was updated, the Libraries began a program of teaching staff about learning organizations and identifying skills they would need as the Libraries grew and changed. To identify those skills, a committee made up of representatives from all staff groups in the Libraries developed a list of core competencies for library staff. These original core competencies have evolved during recent years as the University of Nebraska adopted system-wide competencies for all staff. Core competencies have served well as both a tool for hiring and a plan for staff development. Staff development programs designed to teach core competencies have included presentations on communication skills, a hands-on workshop on creativity, a panel discussion on flexibility/adaptability, and presentations on generational differences in the workplace.

In October of 1996 Dr. Martha Hale, then director of the library school at Emporia State University, visited UNL and introduced the learning organization principles to library faculty and staff. Additional sessions revolved around improving communication and conflict resolution skills. All staff participated in these two-day workshops on skill building to promote group learning and sharing information. Since a key component of a learning organization is group learning and sharing, it was imperative that staff have the skills to succeed in these efforts. Since that first set of programs, the Libraries has offered many training programs and staff development opportunities for library staff and faculty related to the five disciplines of the learning organization.

**Personal Mastery**

A significant amount of learning takes place at the individual level. *Personal mastery*, one of the five learning organization disciplines, requires that individuals accept the personal responsibility of seeking learning opportunities in order to move forward in their work life. The Libraries encourages individual learning and has offered programs on independent learning and self-mastery to encourage staff to seek out learning opportunities. Opportunities for learning and examples of successful learning are shared with coworkers. During the first years of the Libraries’ movement toward becoming a learning organization, staff at all levels were actively encouraged to take time each week to learn something new. For many staff during the first years of the learning organization, this meant learning new computer
skills and developing Internet searching skills. In more recent years library staff members’ learning opportunities have varied widely depending on their job duties and responsibilities, as well as their professional interests.

The Libraries has also sponsored programs on independent learning and self-mastery. Individuals were encouraged to ask themselves the following questions:

- What do I want to accomplish this year?
- What do I want to accomplish during the next few years?
- What assets do I have to help accomplish this?
- What obstacles are in my way?
- What do I need from the Libraries or from the University to help?
- What do I need my supervisor to do to help?
- What is my pattern of failure?
- What danger signs should I watch for (or ask my supervisor and colleagues to watch for)?

Follow-up programming included case studies of individuals who evaluated their own circumstances and made changes to move positively in a new direction. These case studies included famous Nebraskans (former football coach and now congressman Tom Osborne, former governor Bob Kerrey), as well as the stories of some library staff members. Library staff then investigated their own individual strengths and developed personal inventories of subjects they knew something about and would like to learn more about, as well as lists of subjects they knew little or nothing about but would like to learn more about because it would be helpful in their work.

The Libraries encourages opportunities for personal mastery through staff sharing, committee membership and work, a campus mentoring program, staff development workshops, and library-sponsored computer skills/training courses, as well as flexible scheduling for staff interested in taking campus classes.

Other staff development and training efforts have included presentations on time management, meeting skills, ergonomics, and environmental health and safety, as well as sessions on coping with change, building resiliency during difficult times (budget cuts), harassment training, and disaster preparedness.

**Group Learning**

While all library staff and faculty have been encouraged to attend the above programs, learning also takes place at the group and organizational levels. Faculty, administrators, middle managers, frontline staff, supervisors of students, public services staff, technical services staff, and particular departments and units are all groups that benefit from specific training tailored to their needs. Training efforts aimed at these groups have included programs on specific computer/technical skills, project management,
organizational culture, and partnerships and collaborations. Supervisory training has included sessions on how to do evaluations, decision-making, corrective action, family and medical leave, meeting facilitation, and search committee certification.

**NUValues**

Since 1996 the University of Nebraska campuses (Lincoln, Omaha, Kearney, and the Medical Center) have adopted a new personnel compensation and classification system, NUValues, for all university employees except for faculty. In the Libraries this includes all library staff except for librarians. The basic premise for NUValues is that job classification is simplified, with fewer levels or bands. Individuals can take on new responsibilities and move within a band much more easily than in more rigid classification systems. Along with this more flexible system comes a responsibility for the Libraries to provide additional and tailored individual and group learning opportunities for library staff.

The move to the new personnel system has meshed well with the learning organization model because the new system emphasizes skill building and learning as the basis for salary increases rather than seniority or rank. Now the reward system is more closely linked to the efforts of the Libraries to become a learning organization.

**Mental Models and Systems Thinking**

The Libraries are now working on addressing the disciplines of mental models and systems thinking. A major restructuring effort has just been completed, changing the Libraries from a seven-department structure to a four-department structure. The merger of units, elimination of some units, and four changes in department chair positions means staff will need to reassess their assumptions about how their work group operates. This is a perfect time, then, to do training on identifying assumptions and surfacing mental models. The restructuring is also giving the Libraries the opportunity to revisit the ideas of systems thinking as people shift how they view the organization.

**Results to Date**

How can the Libraries measure how well the implementation of the learning organization is going? Besides reviewing the evaluation from staff development programs and revisiting training efforts to determine skill levels, the Libraries has recently participated in a campus-wide survey by the Gallup Corporation. The survey includes questions pertaining to the following:

- How often do staff have an opportunity to do their best each day?
- How clear are expectations?
- How often do staff get to learn something new?
The results for the Libraries showed that most staff rated the Libraries as excellent or very good on these key learning organization concepts. In fact, the Libraries rated higher than most academic departments on these measures. These independent results helped show the progress that has been made and opened the door for unit-based conversations on how to continue to improve.

CONCLUSION

The learning organization model is one way that libraries can design organizations that are successful in rapidly changing environments. The key elements of a learning organization as espoused in the five disciplines of personal mastery, shared vision, group learning, mental models, and systems thinking provide libraries with the tools needed to create flexible, agile organizations. By developing a shared vision and promoting group and individual learning, libraries can create staffs that are committed to finding the best ways to fulfill the organization’s mission, goals, and objectives. By surfacing mental models and promoting systems thinking the organization can help unlock individual creativity, help staff move past perceived barriers, and assist everyone in embracing and creating positive change. By adopting the learning organization model, then, libraries can build paths for individuals that will lead to success and help libraries thrive in times of change.

As we found at UNL the learning organization model has helped the organization adapt to a changing environment. Staff have the skills to adjust to a new organizational structure and to new working relationships within their units. They see learning as a way to address change and to explore new ideas. They are learning to review their assumptions about how the organization functions and to look for ways to improve the organization by changing whole processes and systems.

Further research is needed on how best to implement the five disciplines of the learning organization within any particular culture. The processes that worked at UNL can provide ideas on how to address the key concepts. However, organizations will need to learn their own ways to bring learning organization ideas into their environments and to create effective organizations that are willing to change.

REFERENCES


The System Design Approach to Organizational Development: The University of Arizona Model

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ABSTRACT
Leadership in the design of organizational systems is the primary focus of an organizational development (OD) position. The OD consultant (internal or external) guides the leadership group to understand the complex nature of human organizations and the need for creation of systems and processes that support the mission, values, goals, and vision of the organization. As organizational structures change to adapt to new environmental challenges and development of a new culture is required, the approach to, and design of, new organizational systems will be critical to the success of the organization. This article will define for OD practitioners, human resource professionals, and library leaders some of the myriad organizational support systems that must be created and integrated to support new, postmodern organizational structures where collaborative learning, participative decision-making, and shared accountability can ensure adaptability, flexibility, and the potential for future success. The author’s experience in the University of Arizona (UA) Library over the past ten years will be used to articulate potential approaches while sharing personal views of the successes and challenges.

INTRODUCTION
Over the past ten years, the University of Arizona (UA) Library has been a laboratory for learning about organizational change. This article does not intend to advocate for any particular change model but rather to share observations from one individual who has played a leadership role in that change process and to frame those observations within a developing
theory that organizational change is best studied and assessed through the lens of system integration.

Certain organization researchers will be central to the exposition of theory embraced in this article. The work of W. Edwards Deming, Peter Scholtes, and Peter Senge form the core of the systems theory presented here. Deming defines a system as “a network of interdependent components that work together to accomplish the aim of the system. . . . An example of a system, well-optimized is a good orchestra” (1994, p. 50). Scholtes notes, “Systems consist of subsystems or, if they’re small enough in scope, processes. What is the point at which something is no longer a system or a subsystem but becomes a process? I don’t know. (When does a ship become small enough to be called a boat?)” (Scholtes, 1998, p. 58).

In this article the term “system” will be operationally defined as the network of processes that provides the infrastructure or framework that supports the actual work of an organization, the Gemba, as Scholtes calls it. “The Gemba is the assembly of critical resources and the flow of work that contribute to those efforts that directly add value to the customer” (Scholtes, 1998, p.76). The infrastructure systems described in this article are non-Gemba; rather they are those that exist to support the Gemba: the leadership system, the team system, the planning system, the communication system, the process improvement system, the performance effectiveness management system, the compensation and reward system, and the recruitment and hiring system. While this article focuses on several important systems, there are other systems that are also crucial to library organizational success, especially the management information system, the technological system, the budgeting system, the fundraising system, and the marketing system.

Deming believed that most problems in an organization can be attributed to a system, not to people. “In my experience, most troubles and most possibilities for improvement add up to proportions something like this: 94% belong to the system (the responsibility of management); 6% are attributable to special causes” (Deming, 1994, p. 33). Scholtes adds his viewpoint on the importance of becoming knowledgeable about organizational systems and identifies what is wrong with our present systems. Among a long list of current systems issues, which he calls “brainshakers,” he includes the following:

We look to heroic efforts of outstanding individuals for our successful work. Instead we must create systems that routinely allow excellent work to result from the ordinary efforts of people. . . . Changing the system will change what people do. Changing what people do will not change the system. . . . The greatest conceit of managers is that they can motivate people . . . attempts (they make) will only make things worse. . . . Behind incentive programs lies management’s patronizing and cynical set of assumptions about workers . . . Managers imply that their workers are withholding a certain amount of effort, waiting for it to be bribed out of them. (Scholtes, 1998, p. ix–x)
Senge’s works, *The Fifth Discipline* (1990) and *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook* (Senge et al., 1994), also have greatly influenced the theories put forward here. Senge brings together the need for systems thinking with the practice of other disciplines. “The organizations that will truly excel in the future will be the organizations that discover how to tap people’s commitment and capacity to learn at all levels” (Senge, 1990, p. 4). His five disciplines outline practices that will enable continuing reflection, research, and learning about organizational systems and human development that can result in continuous improvement. Viewing the organization as a system within systems and made up of systems (systems thinking), supporting people in gaining proficiency and pursuing personal visions (personal mastery), making conscious our deeply held beliefs and assumptions and examining their appropriateness (mental models), developing the capacity to hold a shared picture of the future we seek to create (shared vision), and using dialogue to increase the capacity of groups to learn and discover new insights (team learning) are the five key practices that can unleash the potential for organizational learning (Senge, 1990, pp. 5–12). These practices or disciplines must be embedded in the systems we design to support organizational success.

In a recent essay Senge emphasizes that “Purpose is emergent. It can never be specified by design. . . . Emergence alters design. As purpose evolves, so too will function” (Senge, 2000, p. 78). The following examination presupposes that, as the mission for academic libraries emerges in the postmodernist, digital age, there will be a critical need to understand how the design of organizational systems support that expanding and, perhaps, changing mission. The views expressed are those of the internal organization development consultant to one library, which, over the past ten years, has prepared for the transformational changes that will occur in the twenty-first century.

**Background on the University of Arizona Library’s Evolution as a Team-Based, Customer-Focused, Learning Organization**

In 1989 the University of Arizona Library administrators charged a task force, the Access and Ownership Task Force, to investigate the impact of rising serial prices on the library’s ability to continue to build high-quality research collections. Analysis of the effect of internal budget reductions and external forces within the scholarly communication process, not the least of which were the escalating costs of purchasing and warehousing large collections, led the task force to recommend that the library pursue an “access” strategy in the future in order to ensure its success in serving the university in its vision of being a top-tier Research I institution. The Task Force also recommended that a new organizational structure would
be needed to support this new and very different strategic focus. This recommendation was in place as the new dean arrived in 1990.

In 1992 the new dean of libraries recognized the need to develop a strategy that would move the library forward strategically and formed a steering committee to complete a self-study. The charge included: (1) identifying what values, vision, and assumptions should drive the creation of an organization that would ensure future success, and (2) deciding (with the dean’s input) how that organization should be structured. In 1993 this committee decided that the library should become a team-based, customer-focused, quality, learning organization. After reading the literature on organizations and receiving input from staff, faculty, and students, key assumptions of this “new” organization were developed by the steering committee. The following summary describes the thinking of those involved in this decision:

A. Increased staff productivity and quality service would ensure that the library remained central to the university’s educational and research mission despite continued and expected budget reductions. Service would become more and more technology based and customers would demand self-sufficiency.

B. Involvement and empowerment of the entire staff in the new team-based organization would lead to the development of new capabilities that would be needed for a successful future. Teams would “own” work processes and set goals that resulted in quality service for customers.

C. Assessment of current and future customer needs would be central to strategic planning, prioritization of work, and the allocation of resources. Data and information would be the basis for decision-making, not authority and personal experience.

D. Self-accountability and organizational support for personal mastery and team learning would result in high performance and commitment to continuous learning. Staff would receive support to successfully engage in change. This would help the library adapt to a radically different model of organization effectiveness and remain flexible enough to respond quickly to changes in the environment.

E. The focus of the organization would be strategically planning for the future, investing in continuous process improvement and technological innovation as users’ needs change and the capabilities of electronic technology transform the way libraries provide access.

These key assumptions drove not only the creation of a new structure but also the need to create organizational systems that supported people to be successful in working within that structure. Over the next ten years these systems that would support the goals of the library—high performance, continuous improvement, cost containment, increased access, satisfaction
of future customers as well as the development of a competent, committed, successful, and highly motivated staff—were developed.

The new organizational systems would align together to support the culture change. The organizational change would be drastic. The UA Library of the 1970s and 1980s was a participative but traditionally hierarchical, non-technical, inward-focused organization that valued collection building and was based on a service model that assumed users’ dependence on mediation. The new goals called for a flatter organization with shared decision-making and problem-solving responsibilities, utilizing technology for its potential to increase access and support innovative, unmediated self-service. External focus would help the staff anticipate, meet, and surpass the expectations of customers—even as their research and learning needs and expectations changed radically. As the nonhierarchical approach took shape, it was clear that all the embedded systems that had supported work in the former organizational structure were incompatible with the new structure and goals. Every system—from the leadership and hiring systems to work process design and performance management—would have to change. Strong commitment to the new values and vision held the pioneering group together in the early days of experimentation, but it became clear this would not be enough to sustain the practices desired in the new organization. Systems aligned with goals and principles needed to be created, implemented, and melded with the structure and adopted as central to the organization’s culture. Culture change would not have been possible without systems change.

The key driver for the University of Arizona Library’s 1993 restructuring was the continuing need to respond to present and future budget reductions. The need to eliminate non-value-added work, cut costs, implement new electronic services, and continuously improve quality as customers became more demanding called for a radically different leadership system. The steering committee decided to reduce the number of work units and to replace traditional positions of hierarchical, managerially focused department heads with facilitative leaders of teams. They believed that more value-added work could be performed by leader-led teams than by manager-led departments. They also believed that staff and librarians, if called upon to work at the highest levels of their classification and full professional abilities, would need little supervision. As leaders facilitated agreement on mission, vision, and values, conflict would be minimal; as staff were empowered to participate fully in decision-making, the need to manage people in a hierarchical supervisory system would be greatly reduced. Facilitated group decision-making would replace the need for unilateral managerial decisions and would actually increase the quality of decisions made, as well as the commitment to implementation.

Functional, or permanent, teams and cross-functional, temporary, teams would work together to accomplish strategic work. Assessment would lead to “just in time” projects. As learning increased, quality would increase. As
customers’ needs changed, the organization would be able to restructure to respond appropriately. Staff would not just have a job, they would be members of the organization, working where their skills were needed, completing projects and moving on to other more strategic work. This vision was consistent with then-current organizational theories.

Today’s organizations are evolving into federations, networks, clusters, cross-functional teams, temporary systems, ad hoc task forces, lattices, modules, matrices—almost anything but pyramids with their obsolete top-down leadership. Organizations that want to be in the phone book in 2005—will be led by leaders who encourage healthy dissent and values those followers courageous enough to say no. Success will go to the leader who exults in cultural differences and knows that diversity is the best hope for long-term survival and success. (Bennis, 2000, p. 121)

The UA Library continues to function within the team-based, shared leadership model. Responsibility and authority for decision-making is shared throughout the organization among the functional and cross-functional teams and leadership groups. To a large extent, strategic planning and budgeting decisions are made by standing cross-functional teams appointed by the Library Cabinet, the library-wide leadership group. Teams are charged to decide their own annual plans based on assessment of implicit and explicit, present and future needs of customers. Technical infrastructure systems are designed by cross-functional teams using a formal systems analysis approach. Restructuring of teams and redesign of work processes often occurs after formal process improvement studies have been conducted by cross-functional teams. All teams are guided to seek ways of reducing costs while increasing quality.

The discipline of personal mastery is embedded in all systems. Staff and librarians volunteer for and lead cross-functional teams, step in to fill team-leader vacancies, and participate fully in library-wide dialogues, sharing responsibility for continuous improvement. In addition, although all functional team leaders report directly to the dean, most library-wide policy and budget decision-making is delegated to the fifteen-member Cabinet, where decisions are made by consensus. All faculty and staff search teams utilize consensus decision-making, with the dean joining the team for faculty searches. Leadership responsibilities for communicating externally involve subject experts as well as team leaders. Liaison responsibilities with the campus deans and faculty are delegated to the team leaders and teams. The dean and Cabinet play a strong role in guiding and supporting teams, questioning draft plans, and giving input to proposed solutions and methods for improving services, but ultimate decision-making authority lies with the teams. Each cross-functional team is charged with gathering and analyzing data, assessing needs, benchmarking good practices, and choosing alternate methods for resolving issues or creating new services or structures. Data, analysis, and experimentation guide the decision-making process.
Leadership support provided by the internal organization development (OD) consultants has been critical to sustaining this model. In 1993 training in facilitative leadership skills, teambuilding, facilitation of meetings, and communication of the guiding principles was the primary focus. In 1994 and 1996 training was needed in initiating process improvement approaches, helping teams to integrate tools, and techniques for group decision-making and problem-solving. As the team-based organization matured, consulting on organization design and facilitating the integration of non-Gemba organizational systems became the leadership focus of these OD personnel helping the organization to apply new theory and practice. Kotter notes that in any change process, “consolidating gains and producing more change” is critical. In order to be ultimately successful, Kotter contends, the organization must be committed to “Changing all systems and structures that do not fit together and don’t fit the transformation vision; hiring, promoting, and developing people who can implement the change vision; and reinvigorating the process with new projects, themes, and change agents” (Kotter, 1996, p. 21). Alignment of systems is critical to success; misalignment will not only cause confusion for the members of the organization but potentially derail the change vision itself.

During this ten-year journey the UA Library has recognized that customers and stakeholders are the focus of all library initiatives. The staff bring their collective professional values, vision, and commitment to quality to problems customers encounter finding information, accessing the cultural record, learning, and contributing to the continuing development of knowledge. Many successes have put the UA Library in the forefront of academic libraries.

**Developing the Non-Gemba Organizational Systems**

The development of organizational support systems is time consuming and challenging. Each system requires rethinking of system goals and processes. Design of new systems requires broad organizational and human resource knowledge. Systems that are deeply embedded in a hierarchical culture are not easy to replace. A feeling of loss, a sense of confusion, and lack of understanding of the reasons for change often lead to difficulties in the implementation period. Constant assessment and refinement of the system are required. New members, new leaders, and new external challenges keep the development of the systems in flux. The dynamic and complex change process demands that the leadership system be developed first. The order of descriptions of each system below reflects, generally, the order in which the UA Library developed its present organizational infrastructure, although there may be a more logical order of approach. It should also be recognized that parts of these systems need to be put in place simultaneously and as early as possible. Adherence to basic principles such as empowerment, accountability, and personal mastery, and the goals
of maximizing capacity, supporting change, being responsive to customers’ needs, and demonstrating a return on investment for stakeholders are paramount concerns during the design and implementation periods. Each of the goals of selected systems will be described, methods for creation suggested, and challenges outlined in the context of what has been learned at the University of Arizona over the past ten years.

The Leadership System

Heifetz and Sinder (1988), in studying the mid-twentieth-century literature on leadership, note that during this period a leader’s capabilities to create and articulate a compelling vision, combined with interpersonal skills that enable others to commit to and participate in whatever it takes to reach that vision, characterized the modernist theory of leadership. They reported that the complex nature of current organizations and the rapidly changing environment have led to a new view of leadership. Kegan agrees with their postmodernist view that in this new environment of constant change, successful leaders lead by “providing context in which all interested parties, the leader included, can together create a vision, mission, or purpose they can collectively uphold” (Kegan, 1994, p. 322). In this postmodernist view, the era of the hero leader has passed, and a new model of collaborative, facilitative leadership emerges.

The leader’s role is to facilitate a shared leadership system, creating an organization that successfully capitalizes on the total competence of its members and is flexible, strategic, action oriented, and learning focused in an environment of radical change. The role of the facilitative leader is that of teacher, architect, visionary, steward, and guide (Senge, 1990; Scholtes, 1998; Bennis, 2000). The facilitative leader recognizes his/her own incomplete knowledge and at the same time appreciates that wide-ranging information, opinion, data, cultural perspective, technological skill, and varying experience are critical to organizational success. The facilitative leader guides and influences and insists on accountability to customers. Internally, he/she supports continuous dialogue, fact checking, testing, assumption questioning, and the creation of vision that will focus the organization on a successful future. The leader orchestrates the creation of a culture through the development of systems that mine the full capability of the organization, allocating leadership responsibilities to teams on every level throughout the organization. Dew (2003) also recommends that leaders focus on studying organizational systems to uncover the beliefs and behaviors that shape these systems and ask whether there is congruence between belief, behavior, vision, and purpose. Along with Deming and others, Dew holds that it is the job of leadership to uncover the root causes of lack of quality in an organization and to develop a culture and systems that support quality. He purports that a dysfunctional belief system embedded in a leadership system will cause an organization to fail to reach its quality
goals and challenging vision. His list of dysfunctions include placing budgetary, schedule, and political considerations ahead of quality; being arrogant; lacking fundamental knowledge, research, or education; pervasively believing in entitlement; and “practicing autocratic behaviors that result in endullment” (Dew, 2003, pp. 4–7). People hear the quality message and leaders embrace the quality lingo, but when quality principles and philosophy run into the deeply entrenched dysfunctional belief system in these organizations, quality is tossed out and condemned. Managers denigrate quality concepts as a fad and return to their focus on costs, schedule, political manipulation, arrogance, ignorance and entitlement.

At the heart of such leadership system dilemmas are what Argyris calls “dominant theories in use” or “Model I” theories (Argyris, 1985, 1990, 2000). He holds that values represented in actions, actual behaviors, and their consequences are predictable because of a basic belief system associated with the modernist leadership system—that leaders must be in control, must appear to win, and must suppress negative feelings. In response to these beliefs, leaders actually behave in this way by advocating views, evaluating performance, and attributing causes or explanation without actual research or the intention of creating “actionable knowledge.” Overall, Argyris concludes that Model I behaviors combine with Model I values:

The governing values (in Model I) include Be in unilateral control; Win, do not lose; and Suppress negative feelings. The three dominant action strategies (Model II) are Advocate views, Evaluate performance, and Attribute causes or explanations. When these are produced consistently with Model I values, they will result in defensive consequences such as escalating errors, self-fulfilling prophecies, and self-seeking processes. (Argyris, 2000, p. 421)

Ultimately, routine learning, not transformational learning, occurs. Dew points out that this culture becomes self-perpetuating as those who are selected for promotion are those whose espoused values and visible behaviors reflect the larger managerial group. “If few quality managers make it into senior management positions, it may be because, in some organizations, senior management does not really believe in the quality concepts” (Dew, 2003, p. 6). It is very challenging in this Model I world to change the leadership system to one of collaboration, learning, and facilitation.

“Dialogue, reasonableness, and fair treatment of alternative points of view,” though “difficult and sometimes impossible to attain” (Kegan, 1994, p. 328), are an integral part of a shared leadership system. Development of consensus as opposed to the development of group agreement to a single leader’s vision or espousal of a “right” theory is the goal. All staff participate in leadership with the facilitative leader teaching; sharing information that only he/she has; prodding the group to engage fully in discovering “reality”; and engaging in inquiry and advocacy to increase the quality of thinking. Guiding the group to closure through synthesis and summary,
checking for consensus, and communicating to other important groups and constituents become the primary roles of this new leader.

Methods for Creating the Leadership System  A significant investment in leadership training is needed to support a shared leadership model. Team leader job descriptions must shift from a managerial focus, with emphasis on in-depth subject expertise and supervisory experience, to a leadership focus, with emphasis on interpersonal and facilitation skills, visioning capabilities, and a commitment to consensus building and the success of others. Expectations for team leaders need to be communicated and training provided.

Leadership training retreats, which can be facilitated by campus or national trainers, convey the principles and practices of facilitative leaders and teach approaches to leading group planning, problem-solving, and consensus decision-making. The Association of Research Libraries Office of Leadership and Management Services provided consultation and training to the UA Libraries. In addition, new leaders were sent to national seminars and conferences related to leadership in team-based organizations. A community of practice, the Team Leader Learning Network, was formed, as recommended by MetaWest Consultants, Inc., to enhance collaborative learning of teams and work team leaders who had both managerial and leadership responsibilities. Supervisory responsibilities, although reduced, have not completely disappeared.

Developing a shared leadership system requires learning new techniques and tools—facilitation, planning, problem-solving, and decision-making tools—the tools “for continuous improvement and effective planning” contained in the Memory Jogger II (Brassard & Ritter, 1994), which provide the formal means for involving groups in quality improvement and learning. These graphic tools outline steps in the research process and teach analytical approaches that assist groups in discovering new ideas, observing and gathering “objective” data, jointly analyzing reality, and developing tests and piloting experiences to assess the ultimate value of decisions. In addition to proficient use of these tools, the facilitative leader reminds the group of the mission, context, and future vision and provides synthesis and feedback. The leader facilitates the full engagement of diverse, knowledgeable people with differing interpersonal skills and varied perspectives.

Challenges and Learnings  The deeply embedded cultural view of the leader as knowledgeable expert whose vision should be accepted and who has overall control of decision-making is a major barrier to development of a shared leadership model (note Argyris, 2000, p. 421, above). The facilitative leader not only has to constantly communicate that he/she “doesn’t know,” he/she has to develop techniques for helping others, the “followers,” to recognize that they have knowledge to contribute that is valid, useful, and critical. Facilitative leadership is about helping others discover their own leadership capability and the vision within themselves that integrates with others’ visions to cocreate a sustainable and valuable future picture that
calls for enrollment and commitment. Facilitative leadership goes beyond gaining “buy-in,” using external rewards or the honor of positive associative relationships with individual leaders to gain compliance (Senge, 1990, pp. 218–219). The successful facilitative leader builds leader-like followers, who develop skills and act successfully because of their own intrinsic motivation and the opportunity to actualize their own capabilities. The facilitative leader’s greatest virtue is humility. Whereas the modernist leader of the early to mid-twentieth century viewed him/herself as out front or at the top, the postmodernist leader of the twenty-first-century organization recognizes that leadership is a collaborative process; the leader at the top is one among many and all staff assume a variety of leadership roles.

Another challenge for the facilitative leader is the lack of training in managing conflict. The leader’s role in a high-performing organization is to uncover conflict, to discover differentiation among viewpoints, and to seek integration that leads to new thinking (Lorsch & Allen, 1973, p. 181). Engaging in explicit efforts to surface conflict is culturally uncomfortable, time consuming, and contrary to an inherent bias for control. The process of building convergence requires ultimate commitment to the value of diversity, skill in moving from dialogue to skillful discussion and decision-making (Senge, 1994, p. 386–387), and a concentration of focused time. As external forces and the revolution of customer expectations appear to call for more timely decisions, sharing leadership appears to be counterintuitive. Taking time to develop decisions that are based on research, analysis, and the building of consensus challenges the deeper belief system that leaders must respond quickly and appear authoritative. Facilitative leaders experience a constant tension between learning and performing; involving and moving forward; gathering data, analyzing, and examining alternatives while pressured to achieve results.

Naming a specific group of leaders as team leaders and appointing them to a cabinet or top-level council leads to mistaken assumptions that other areas of leadership are “less important” or “less valid.” It is difficult to maintain the “picture” of the widely shared leadership system, with responsibilities spread throughout the organization, when one group assumes a stronger role in providing guidance. True delegation of decision-making is critical. At the UA Library, the Strategic Planning Team decides on a five-year plan and then funds and guides the development of annual action strategies. The Information Resources Council allocates the $8,000,000 information resources budget. Policies internal to a team’s processes and services are developed and implemented by those teams. This sharing of decision-making authority is critical to a shared leadership system.

Investment in leadership training of staff with wide-ranging abilities is challenging. As capabilities grow, however, the organization is able to reapply newly learned skills and respond more quickly to create new services and technologies. The deep investment in training and staff development
comes with risks—as staff develop leadership skills, they may pursue promotions elsewhere in more hierarchical organizations. For some, the opportunity to stay in the library and utilize these skills over time in a variety of projects is enough of a reward. For others, leaving the organization for immediate increases in salary and positional status becomes a better option (Scholtes, 1998, p. 375). In the early 1990s there was no system in place at the UA Library to significantly reward those who accepted the leadership challenge. A compensation system needed to be developed that rewarded those who stepped forward and accumulated and practiced leadership skills (see below in the section on compensation).

In looking at the leadership system from a staff perspective, the very newness of the team approach required a gradual evolution of the leader’s facilitative role. Staff were familiar with a model of managerial supervision with individual work assigned by and performance appraised by supervisors. Rewards and recognition came from hierarchical authorities. As the team system was implemented some preferred this more passive model and challenged the facilitative leadership approach. Not only did the leaders have to learn to behave differently, they had to support change in how staff approached their work, helping them to expand their capabilities and responsibilities to participate in the leadership system.

Facilitative leaders are sometimes forced by external policy requirements to perform the role of evaluative managers. They also continue to be responsible for addressing the few predictable, but time-consuming, personnel problems that result when staff demonstrate less than full commitment to the vision, goals, and team practices. It takes time and patience to uncover the source and investigate what other systems might be contributing to the problem. Facilitative leaders have to look for systems problems when performance is unsatisfactory. Did the hiring process result in a mismatch? Did the orientation process fail to prepare the new staff member? Was the training system adequate? Was the mentoring and performance management process failing? Listening, learning, and analysis are very integral to the facilitative leaders approach. Recently, in-depth training and practice in the use of a nonhierarchical, facilitative, five-step process for confronting and collaboratively solving performance problems, called Constructive Dialogue, has been introduced as a tool that combines good supervisory practice with the team systems approach. Constructive Dialogue stresses the importance of direct feedback, which is offered to support positive change, and active listening, which is designed to help all parties understand, analyze, and choose the best courses of action (Ray, 2002).

The leadership system in an organization that is involved in continuous improvement and learning requires a major investment of time, training, and assessment. Alignment of individual efforts with system goals needs to be continually observed. Feedback is critical for sustained development. The assignment of other responsibilities (such as involvement in consortial part-
nerships and regional and national change efforts) also needs to be shared so as to not overburden those in “established” leadership positions, as well as to provide opportunities for others to fully participate in the shared leadership system. A particular challenge comes from the hierarchical systems that surround a library choosing a shared leadership model and expectations that “the” leader, the one with the relevant title, attend external committee meetings or administrative councils. If not resisted, this pressure can add to the difficulty of sustaining the shared leadership model. Nominal membership with generous “back-up” attendance or actual delegation of responsibilities for external political appointments will strengthen the commitment to introduce and gain the benefits from a shared leadership model—wider learning, increased capacity, opportunity for self-development, and, ultimately, broader and deeper commitment to vision and goals.

Developing a shared leadership system has enabled the UA Library to have major successes with a constantly decreasing base of staff resources and a steady base of financial resources. Staff-driven strategic planning and budget allocation, transformational change in the quality and efficiency of processes, and the current implementation of innovative technologies that support anywhere, anytime, tailored access to information are examples of successes of the shared leadership system.

The Team System

The primary goal of creating team systems as the basic organization of work is to increase organizational performance. Teams are “discrete units of performance, not a positive set of values” (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993, p. 21). This premise is often lost when discussing the current trend to organize work units into teams. Performance enhancement is gained by increased involvement, collaborative learning, challenging the quality of individual thinking, and discovering new realities. Mutual accountability is central to team performance. Katzenbach and Smith’s research revealed that where discipline, understanding, and practice in teamwork skills have been absent, teams have “failed” to produce new thinking or advance performance. Often when this occurred, team systems themselves were criticized. Most researchers find that the lack of understanding of what comprises a good team system, the lack of appropriate support and training, and the lack of performance expectations are the major contributors to failure (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993; see also Lencioni, 2002; Howard & Miller, 1994; Wheelan, 1999; and Yeatts & Hyten, 1998, among others, for the many challenges associated with building high performing teams).

Where Katzenbach and Smith found high-performing teams, this definition applied: “A small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable” (Katzenbach &

When faced with the need to constantly improve organizational capability, teams give employees “opportunities to make independent decisions, collaborate, recognize and solve problems, and develop new approaches to accomplish tasks. Out of this process naturally come innovations that help the entire organization and its community thrive” (Johnson & Johnson, 2003, p. 1). Viewing teamwork as a system that requires discipline, structure, and training in interpersonal and group process skills that result in high performance helps facilitate the results expected.

Significant performance challenges can energize teams regardless of where they are in an organization. Organizational leaders can best foster team performance by building a strong performance ethic rather than by establishing a team-promoting environment alone. Biases toward individualism exist but need not get in the way of team performance. Discipline—both with the team and across the organization—creates the conditions for high team performance (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993, pp. 12–14).

Methods for Creating the System Creating a team system requires the creation of performance goals and an accountability system, as well as the redesign of work units around related processes. After adopting the key principle of customer centeredness, the UA Library chose to organize teams as much as possible around specific customer groups that had “needs” in common. By organizing around customer groups (existing colleges, undergraduates, and staff), teams adopted the performance challenge of assessing and responding to new needs of their assigned customer groups. As customers’ needs changed, the teams would need to change processes, develop innovative services, adopt new technology, or redesign work to improve quality.

Some teams, however, remained organized around work processes that resulted in services to all customers. The performance challenge for these teams was to discover the capabilities of their processes and engage in continuous improvement. They also had to assess whether the processes they managed were still relevant and value added. As customer needs changed, these teams transformed and acquired ownership for new processes.

As the UA Library moved from a hierarchical departmental structure to a team system, many steps were involved. System-wide design and description of teams was accomplished by two sets of cross-functional “design” teams. Recruitment and appointment of team leaders, with the newly developed role of “facilitative leadership,” was accomplished by a cross-functionally elected selection team, which practiced consensus decision-making, a key to team system success. The new team leader group, using a Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Interest (KSAI) Inventory completed by each staff member, assigned staff to the new teams. Development of team missions, visions, and customer identification followed. Identification of subunits of work around
which to organize teams and work teams was decided by each team. Lastly, team leaders facilitated the setting of team and individual goals.

As Katzenbach and Smith make very clear, clarity of purpose, explicit performance expectation, the utilization of good data gathering and analysis techniques, group meeting management, and planning and decision-making skills are key to the success of teams. Permanent teams review their mission, vision, processes, and quality standards (measurable goals) annually. Teams’ goals are reviewed for alignment with the library-wide strategic plan, as well as customers’ expressed and unexpressed present and future needs. Teams should focus primarily on discovering what customers will need in the future. “The fact is that the customer expects only what you and your competitor have led him to expect. He is a rapid learner” (Deming, 1994, p. 7). Managing the present processes, planning for the future, and evaluating performance become the team’s focus.

While permanent teams have mission and goal frameworks within which they plan their annual work, cross-functional project or study teams are given a clear charge explaining their purpose, the problem or opportunity, parameters, products/outcomes, resources, suggested approaches, reporting relationships, roles, and timeframe (milestones and deadlines). Skills and knowledge required for the team to be successful are included in the charge and guide the appointment process. All teams are coached to focus first on outcomes for customers, using data (not the opinions of “internal experts”), benchmarking, gathering information, engaging in dialogue, and seeking feedback. Before implementing decisions, piloting or testing their validity is advised. Successful teams base decisions on research and learning rather than on groupthink or quick agreement on what might constitute good practice.

All teams receive facilitated team-building in which the charge is reviewed for mutual understanding; team members share what skills, experience, level of commitment, and interest they bring to the team’s work; ground rules or norms for team behavior are developed; meeting management techniques are reviewed; and project planning tools are presented. Depending on the type of team and experience of team members, training in the use of quality tools, assessment techniques, consensus decision-making steps, or other group process approaches is also provided.

The commitment to performance is reinforced through the involvement of all members of the team in either developing the team mission, vision, and goals (in a functional team) or reviewing and questioning and coming to shared agreement about the charge (in a cross-functional team). Teams report progress regularly to the whole library, and the Cabinet leadership group is charged with supporting their success. Changes in deadlines, direction, and/or resource support are negotiated if needed, but teams are encouraged to find ways to accomplish the desired result and live up to the “performance challenge.” As Katzenbach and Smith predict, teams
that follow good practice and receive adequate training are largely successful. Many teams at the UA Library have developed innovations that are now benchmarked by other academic libraries. Others have designed and implemented leading-edge systems and award-winning services.

**Challenges and Learnings** In their research on hundreds of organizations, Katzenbach and Smith found that, although the power of teams was understood as making a difference in performance, most people “did not apply what they already knew about teams in any disciplined way and thereby miss the performance potential” (1993, p. 12). They point to the primary sources of people’s reluctance about teams and potential causes of team failure:

1. **Lack of conviction**—Belief that teams will waste time, that meetings are destined to be unproductive, that people cannot work well together without hierarchical control, and that empowerment is dangerous contributes to this cause of failure. Lack of conviction leads to lack of training or only superficial implementation of team systems. Teams are not wholly empowered with decision-making authority or given a wide berth for discovering creative and new solutions. A true performance challenge is lacking. Teams also are not given clear goals and timelines, which leads to a lack of productivity.

2. **Personal discomfort and risk**—Risk, personal discomfort, and conflict are some of the feelings associated with teamwork. Many people are unskilled in how to interrelate with others; some prefer to work alone. Others are wary of the requirement to commit to the work entailed in coming up with a new solution or a different, expected outcome. Others fear the reliance on others’ contributions for achieving success. One of the biggest barriers to teamwork is our cultural value of individual performance, responsibility, and reward.

3. **Weak organizational performance ethics**—Where leadership lacks the ability to demand organizational performance and accountability, teamwork will not be able to be successful. Where politics and not performance are the ways in which people are promoted, rewarded, or recognized, the openness, trust, and commitment to mutual accountability needed for team success is not present. Team promotion is not enough to sustain a team system. Emphasis on and expectations for outcomes, results, innovations, and learning are essential to a successful team system.

There have been many challenges involved in designing, developing, and supporting the team system at the UA Library. The amount of learning needed to be successful, as described above, is substantial and ongoing. As teams change membership and as new leaders are appointed, sustaining the skills and practices becomes difficult. A programmable approach to the basics was initially successful, but a just-in-time facilitated approach became the more successful method over time (Diaz & Phipps, 1998).
Organization of teams by customer groups predetermines that some teams will share ownership for similar processes. Team boundaries negatively affect the goal of team learning as teams tend to isolate and work in silos. Communication strategies need to be developed that allow for sharing data, experience, and analysis across teams (see below in the section on communication).

Working together to accomplish team planning, assessment of progress, problem-solving, and critical decision-making is contrary to the embedded culture of “managerial control.” For those learning facilitative leadership skills, the time required to accomplish real involvement and develop shared accountability becomes a major challenge. Supporting team members to participate fully requires the development of trust and the true delegation of power to the team. Facilitation skills are needed to focus meetings and save time. Accountability for mutual support of learning as well as accountability for improved customer service must be structured into the performance system that supports a team system (see the section on performance below). As Kotter points out, “convincing evidence that all the effort is paying off” is critical to the change process (Kotter, 1996, p. 119). The tension between learning and performing must be managed carefully so that each keeps pace with the desired results—building capacity and improving outcomes for customers—in the short and the long term.

One of the major challenges for librarians involved in creating team systems is the counterculture of “professionalism” (Lakos & Phipps, 2004). The professional education system has created a structure that shapes graduates into individual professionals, preparing them for organizational systems in which they are rewarded for individual expertise and individual continuing education based on formalized, externally based learning. The team systems approach highly values collaborative learning that comes from shared experience on the job. The team system aligns individual goals to the needs and goals of the team and requires sharing; opening oneself up to change and influence; and engaging in giving and receiving honest, constructive feedback from peers. As such, the team system is not very compatible with the current hierarchical model found in most libraries. The “command and control” organizational model militates against the success of team systems. The internally focused supervisory structure, in which single managers decide on unit priorities and organization of tasks, is strongly embedded in our work culture and is contrary to the externally focused, customer-driven model of accountability (Cullen, 1998).

As turnover occurs, recruiting new members to a team-based organization needs to take into account that preference for and the ability to work in teams will greatly increase the success of new employees. Job descriptions that stress qualifications of individual expertise and formal education, years of experience, and interpersonal skills useful in a hierarchy need to be changed as teams engage in recruitment and selection of new members. The difficul-
ties of projecting what skills will be needed in the team system, as well as the ability to screen for teamwork skills, can result in hiring members who do not have similar values nor the ability for collaborative work and learning.

As new members join, a concerted effort to acculturate them to the team systems approach is necessary. Why the organization has chosen a team systems strategy should be fully explained, followed by training in teamwork skills. As the team system develops and becomes more successful and leaders practice facilitative leadership, new members, appropriately hired for teamwork skills, commitment to personal mastery, and a preference for collaborative work in a learning environment, as well as the opportunity to engage in shared leadership, can quickly contribute to the team’s success. Orchestrating all of these factors, given the cultural pull of hierarchy and individual professionalism, is a major hurdle to implementing team systems. The development of other infrastructure systems is critical to the successful development of team systems.

*The Planning System*

Developing a system for envisioning, planning, and taking organizational strategic action to assure future success is a requirement for any organization that foresees a need for its core services in the future. A strategic planning system that defines a common destination, sets direction, and involves members in taking action is the ideal system for surviving in a rapidly changing environment. Too many planning systems fail to provide strategic direction, become outdated quickly, and stop short of action planning and continuous review.

Hoshin planning, a system that incorporates Total Quality Management principles, is a model worth investigating for implementation in a shared leadership and team systems–based organization. Derived from the Japanese phrase *Hoshin Kanri*—*Hoshin* meaning shining metal compass or pointing direction and *Kanri* meaning management or policy (Bechtell, 1995, p. 17), *Hoshin* planning focuses and aligns the organization to achieve the highest quality for customers by conducting continuous improvement mechanisms and involving groups in the discovery of innovative breakthroughs. By focusing on the few vital goals that must be accomplished for long-range future success and deploying human and financial resources strategically to accomplish the actions necessary to reach these goals, the planning process guides the choices to invest in future value for customers and build the capacity necessary for that success.

Linking staff actions to future priorities leads to the success of this planning system. “Hoshin planning is not a strategic planning tool; it is an execution tool. . . . It translates the strategic intent into the required day-to-day behavior” (Bechtell, 1995, pp. 17–18). Collective strategy and action planning, gained through a “catch-ball” approach of successive team involvement and extensive communication across the organization, also
enhances success. The Hoshin approach also utilizes quality tools (affinity charts, force-field analysis, decision matrices, etc.) that support team management of planning and decision-making. Ongoing evaluation of progress facilitates learning and continuous improvement.

Most libraries have been creating long-range planning documents for some time—setting annual priorities, assigning work, and managing individual performance in support of the administratively established goals. The Hoshin strategic planning system differs from this Management by Objectives (MBO) approach to planning. Management by Objectives planning is designed to manage individual performance and focuses on individual achievements. Hoshin calls for organizational problem-solving that leads to breakthroughs for customers and focuses on developing staff capabilities. Individual managers are responsible for MBO execution; teams, utilizing quality tools, research, and data, have the responsibility in Hoshin planning. MBO plans for and reviews short-term results; Hoshin planning aligns the organization to long-term directions and continuously reviews progress. MBO usually creates lists of goals for every department; Hoshin requires whole-organizational focus on the few critical strategies that will yield the greatest benefit and ensure competitive advantage (King, 1989).

Methods for Creating the System  Steps to follow when implementing this strategic planning system include:

1. **Choosing the focus**—Make the current state of the organization visible—include an assessment of customers’ future needs and the current process capabilities to succeed, as well as environmental forces that will affect both the suppliers of the organization, process capabilities of the organization, and customers’ and stakeholders’ “new” expectations. Define what the organization wants to be in the future and outline the vision direction. Identify what the organization needs to focus on to achieve its vision and goals.

2. **Aligning the organization**—Develop annual targets with clear measures of success. Develop clear means or strategies for how to achieve these targets. Communicate the targets and strategies throughout the organization. Finalize the three- to five-year plan.

3. **Implementing the plan**—Execute the plan by involving teams in action planning and assignment of responsibility for implementation. Monitor progress throughout the implementation.

4. **Reviewing and improving**—Diagnose and correct problems as soon as possible and at the level closest to the problem. Disseminate learning throughout the organization. Monitor and improve results, the plan, and the planning process. Recognize and celebrate progress (King, 1989, p. 17).

Because involvement is key to successful strategic planning, it is best that a team representing different areas of the library be appointed and
trained in the Hoshin approach. Visioning as a community, developing the organizational values, widespread discussion of the need to focus on the future, seeking input to planning efforts, and training in the use of planning tools lead to the development of interest in, understanding of, and commitment to the resulting plan and strategies for action.

The Hoshin planning system also requires that systems are in place to gather data and assess potential and actual customers now and in the future (see section on management information below). A natural outcome of utilizing the Hoshin approach is the reinforcement of the need for an external organizational focus. A current situation analysis helps staff recognize environmental influences and the effects on the library of changes in the larger systems of higher education, demographics, regional and global economics, and technology. The case for change should be embedded in the planning system. If staff conduct the planning processes and use quality tools, in addition to increased innovation, commitment is enhanced for taking on new work and moving in new directions.

**Challenges and Learnings** Initially, Hoshin planning is time consuming. Alignment of the entire organization and focus on the few critical strategies are unfamiliar to those who have engaged in a MBO type of planning. In addition, this approach to planning requires the same culture changes associated with the team system and a shared leadership system. Hoshin is a methodology to deploy the voice of the customer along with breakthrough strategies; to control the means and methods, not just the results; to focus on continuous improvement, not a calendar-driven system; and to emphasize frequent reviews up and down the organization. Hoshin focuses on strategy management, not personnel performance appraisal. It is a methodology to manage change and to align and coordinate key business systems to achieve specific breakthrough targets (Bechtell, 1995, pp. 19–22).

Collaborative planning has its challenges. Cocreating a clear and challenging vision and developing shared meaning about current reality may cause stress for those newly involved in shared leadership. “The key to more effective creativity . . . is creative tension, the tension between vision and reality” (Senge, 1990, p. 226). Staff have been acculturated to expect that “the leader” will provide a vision. Some leaders and some staff are reluctant to share this responsibility. Learning to gather information for a current situation analysis takes patience.

Identifying, describing, and gaining agreement on terminology for the library’s mission and critical processes and agreeing on appropriate performance measures are new tasks for staff who formally were only involved in the actual Gemba processes such as reference, instruction, and collection development. Narrowing the focus of the plan to the “critical few” in order to maximize the allocation of resources is uncomfortable for an organization that has tried to do everything and serve everybody. In most organizations strategic planning starts with an estimation of budget.
Plans are limited to budget availability. In a Hoshin system, “budgeting-to-plan” is the methodology followed. Ensuring commitment to the plan by maintaining continual involvement, engaging in dialogue, and giving feedback calls for a different use of organizational time.

The steps in the Hoshin planning system are not foreign to libraries, however. Hayes concurs on the importance of alignment and integration of the three levels of management (strategic, tactical, and operational) (Hayes, 1993, p. 4). He points to the disadvantages of “generic” strategic planning as being that “it ties planning to what is currently known, and thus may fail adequately to recognize potentials that depart radically from present trends” (Hayes, 1993, p. 4).

Hoshin planning, by involving all levels of the organization through the catch-ball method and involvement of teams, provides the “performance challenge” important to staff commitment in the team system and reinforces the shared leadership model that enables more information and diverse perspectives on the changing environment to influence the choice of breakthrough actions. The UA Library’s successful implementation of this planning system started simply, using existing data and the knowledge of staff. Gradually skills in environmental scanning, data collection, process description, and SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis were developed. Using the catch-ball approach, the Strategic Long Range Planning Team appoints action planning teams who appoint project implementation teams. All of these teams successfully use quality tools and process improvement steps (see section on process improvement below) to achieve better service for customers and reduce costs for the organization.

The Communication System

Once an organization has decided to implement a team system and support continuous learning, a communication system must be developed. Traditional, hierarchical communication systems are embedded in most organizational structures, and, since some of that hierarchy remains even in a flatter organization, a well-designed system of lateral communication is needed. One’s position in a hierarchical organization usually determines what information is received and with whom it is shared. In an organization that intends to develop shared vision and widespread commitment to change, and empower teams to discover, problem-solve, and make quality decisions, open, horizontal communication systems must be developed.

In this type of organization, it is never clear what information may be relevant to the work a team is doing. Filtering, managing, and limiting the distribution of information simply will not enhance the work of the organization. The availability of key data, of events occurring in other teams on campus or in national arenas, can affect the quality of actions chosen or the success of implementation. Each team’s learning needs to be shared
with other teams for the spiral of deep learning to occur. Teams need to inquire of each other and be open to feedback. Dialogue, the process of openly engaging in advocacy and inquiry for the purpose of building understanding and developing new knowledge, is at the heart of an open communication system (Senge, 1990, p. 278). The communication system needs to provide space and time for interactive reflection, not just sharing of ideas. Members of the organization need opportunities to come together and share ideas, develop trusting relationships, and appreciate differences. Critical thinking must be encouraged in an open communication system. Senge differentiates between participative openness and reflective openness. “Reflective openness is based on skills, not just good intentions . . . recognizing ‘leaps of abstraction’ distinguishing espoused theory from theory in use, and becoming more aware of and responsible for what we are thinking and not saying” (Senge, 1990, p. 278).

Methods for Creating the System  To develop an open communication system leaders must choose to make all but confidential personnel information public and accessible. Designated leaders need to model open communication by sharing information they acquire or are sent because of their “position” in the organization. Reports from national bodies are freely shared on e-mail. Internal e-mail distribution needs to be unmonitored and encouraged for all topics that appear relevant to the organization.

An internal reporting structure or management information system needs to be developed that allows for the sharing of performance data, team thinking, and organizational learning. At the UA Library, each team reports to the library three to four times per year. A full report of annual team goals, progress, and knowledge gained is sent to the all-staff listserv, and a presentation is made at an open meeting. The Cabinet and Strategic Long Range Planning Team (SLRP) attend with as many representatives from every team as possible. After the reports, there is a scheduled dialogue session, where there are questions and additional sharing of ideas on topics important to the group making the reports and to the library as a whole. All action minutes of all team meetings are organized on a shared drive and open to review by the whole library. “Public” calendars account for work schedules. All budget information, pending or actual, is shared with the entire library. The dean of libraries holds all-staff meetings to inform staff of the legislative and campus allocation strategies as they materialize. As the SLRP and Cabinet make budget allocation decisions, the results are promulgated throughout the library. Group budget meetings displaying the whole budget picture are held monthly between the accountants and the team leaders, and between the Information Resource Council and the librarians who are information resources managers. All teams’ expenditures are tracked publicly; any requests for funds are put on the Cabinet agenda for all to see ahead of time and have input into the Cabinet’s decisions.
Challenges and Learnings Without the vertical filtering of information, there is a need for a new “system” of screening. In a flat communication structure this becomes the responsibility of both sender and receiver, but the burden more often falls on the receiver—to review, attend to, and actively pursue. Attendance at open meetings is a personal decision, as is the reading of meeting minutes. Staff need to learn when and when not to hit the “delete” key. Senders are challenged to better label their e-mails, synthesize without filtering, and summarize without missing key information. Preparation for open meetings, reading the e-mailed reports, can increase the quality of the dialogue but requires additional reflection time. The etiquette of e-mail communication is another challenge. When to respond on e-mail, a one-way system that lacks the ease of checking out one’s thinking or the ability to inquire about context or underlying assumptions or points of view, becomes yet another challenge that can lead to unintended conflict.

Many staff feel overwhelmed by the amount of information and the responsibility of processing what is happening in the whole organization, to understand the larger system issues. Learning to participate in dialogue, to offer ideas, to challenge another’s and one’s own thinking, and to inquire about assumptions and openly question one’s own takes practice. Learning to think and reflect on topics beyond one’s assignments and to contribute to the learning of the whole is challenging. Those who enjoy it and develop the necessary skills have the additional challenge of finding balance between their assignments and attendance at open sessions. Schedule management is a necessary skill. Additionally, attempts to increase informal communication by clustering workers in open carrels has both upsides and downsides. Such an arrangement challenges those with a need for privacy or a need for selective times to communicate. It can foster the development of more informal, sharing relationships, however, that expand connection, learning, and teamwork. If the organization is going to broaden and deepen its capacity to respond to the need to change, an open communication system needs to be designed to encourage involvement and learning.

The Process Improvement System

A process improvement system is a research system that supports the organization’s ability to assess what customers value, to analyze performance, and to use the analysis to make improvements. Process improvement is one of the key concepts of Total Quality Management. “When we engage in true process improvement, we seek to learn what causes things to happen in a process and to use this knowledge to reduce variation, remove activities that contribute no value to the product or service produced, and improve customer satisfaction . . . .The ideal outcome is that jobs can be done more cheaply, more quickly, more easily, and . . . more safely” (Bauer, Duffy, & Westcott, 2002, p. 67). Process improvement can be applied to Gemba and non-Gemba processes in an organization.
Walter Shewhart is credited with developing the basic approach to process improvement in the 1920s in his work at the Western Electric Company. He recognized the need to understand what was happening in a process, to devise a way to recognize the different types of mistakes that caused undesirable outcomes, and to design improvements that eliminated mistakes, based on their type. He also recognized that all processes contained natural variation attributable to common causes. Other variation could be attributable to special causes. Basically, he noted that in our attempts to solve problems associated with a process, we make two mistakes: “To react to an outcome as if it came from a special cause, when actually it came from common causes of variation . . . and to treat an outcome as if it came from common causes of variation, when actually it came from a special cause” (Deming, 1994, p. 174). Understanding variation is key to a systems approach to designing organizations and to distinguishing between process and personal performance problems. “Most variation in our organizations is common cause variation built right into the system. But it is a common, though misguided, managerial reflex to regard anything that goes wrong as a special cause attributable to a person” (Scholtes, 1998, p. 27).

Process improvement is key to overall performance improvement. “To increase customer satisfaction with a product or service, an organization must first discover the origins of variation by collecting and analyzing process information. Then, based on the knowledge gained from this study, the organization must develop and implement appropriate actions to eliminate, or at least significantly reduce process variation” (Bothe, 2003, p. 54). Scholtes identifies “The ability to understand the variability of work in planning and problem solving” as one of the “new leadership competencies” (Scholtes, 1998, p. 21). Developing an organizational system where this competency resides within the staff can ensure that continuous learning and continuous improvement result in organizational effectiveness.

**Methods for Creating the System** Understanding work as a process or a set of activities is a first priority if an organization is going to focus on improving quality and containing costs. Mapping all work processes will help employees understand the relationship of assigned or chosen tasks to the results they are designed to accomplish and enable them to engage in the performance challenge of maximizing the capability of the process to produce quality outcomes for customers. The mapping process is followed by a research process.

Research consists, essentially, of stating questions or problems clearly, making observations that are relevant to the problems, analyzing and describing the observations, and interpreting the results of the analyses as they relate to the particular question or problem. Any question or problem for which it is possible to make relevant observations that will assist in the question or clarifying the problem can be made the basis of a research study (Edwards, 1969, p. 18).
Following this basic definition of research, early quality practitioners designed the steps involved in studying organizational processes. Over the fifty years that such study methods have evolved, little variation has developed in the recommended methods. For many this “process improvement” system is simply a problem-solving system that recognizes that most problems in an organization can be attributed to a process, and specifically to process variation. By following a methodology and creating a process improvement system, it is possible to “observe and analyze the workplace” to see who is doing what and why . . . and learn to standardize everyday work, and remove waste (complexity and bureaucracy) from the workplace (Scholtes, 1998, p. 96). Before detailing this methodology, it is important to point out that similar study processes are included in a systems analysis. The main difference is that one research focus is on the process and the other is on the technical systems that are designed to support the process. A combination of the two is recommended in this technological environment.

**Process Improvement Steps**  
Below are the common steps advocated by different individuals. See Barkley & Saylor (2001), Bauer, Duffy, and Westcott (2002), Phipps (2001), and Bothe (2003) for various descriptions of steps involved in process improvement. See Scholtes (1998, chap. 4) for an in-depth discussion of how to approach the steps.

1. **Define the problem(s): develop a clear problem statement from the customer or cost point of view.**—Is wait time from request to availability for reserve readings too long? Are faculty and students frustrated by the delay? Is the cost of processing non-Roman language monographs limiting our ability to provide access to these materials? In order to define the problem, you must begin by understanding whether customers are satisfied with the outcome they receive or whether a cost/benefit concern is the context. Measuring customer value will be the first step in defining the problem. Developing cost information will provide additional context (see step 3 below). How the problem is defined will guide how potential solutions are developed. Problem definition also determines where and how improvement is measured.

2. **Map the current process and learn about all tasks involved, in what order they are accomplished, and whether there is variation among staff in how the tasks are ordered.**—Develop a flow chart, at first at the macro level. Discover the basic tasks involved in completing the final product or delivering the service. Start with the outcomes or outputs and work backwards if several kinds of outputs are involved.

3. **Collect data on the current process; gather all information that will yield information on customer and process requirements and the current capability of the process in meeting these requirements.**—Collect information regarding numbers of staff, volume of outputs, staffing levels involved, turnaround time, reliability of equipment used, estimated costs of accomplishing the steps, numbers of defects or errors, etc.
4. Discover variation in the process; hypothesize the causes of “gaps” between current process capability and customer expectations.—Gather data on the process that relates to customers’ concerns—time, quality, cost, etc. Plot the data on a statistical process control chart to graphically understand where the variation occurs, and discover whether it is within predictable variation limits or can be attributed to special causes. Discover the current process capability to meet customers’ desired level or quality of service or to produce the desired qualities in the products they receive. Look for the cause of the gap by using the data gathered, seeking opinions of staff involved and testing hypotheses.

5. Identify the root causes of problems in the process.—Conduct a root-cause analysis to discover why the variation is occurring or why there is a perceived gap in service quality. Select the most likely causes. The most common causes of process variation include work practices, training/ qualifications, work organization/planning, communications, resource allocation, change in management, and supervision (see a full list in Wilson & Pearson, 1995, pp. 111–112). Use a pareto chart to show the relative importance of the causes. Elimination of causes that are most prevalent can provide the most improvement to the process.

6. Brainstorm and test possible improvement actions.—Assess the effectiveness of the action. In this step, alternatives should be developed and piloted by those who have studied the process. Include in this step an examination of current potential technological solutions. Evaluate all ideas as to their ultimate impact on solving problems and delighting customers. Combine ideas, evaluate for cost, and assess potential training needs prior to choosing the most likely candidates for implementation. The “best ideas,” usually assessed for ease of implementation as well as impact, are combined and piloted. Improvements should also be “beta-tested” with customers to see if there is an increase in satisfaction.

7. Implement changes in the process that will lead to improvements for customers.—This is a crucial step in any process improvement. Remap the process, train staff in the new process, and establish how the new process will be measured. Prepare staff for the reasons for change. If they are involved in the study and trust the methodology, they are more likely to understand and embrace the need for change. Provide support for training and practice. Effective training will ultimately lead to success of the new process and eliminate the potential to abandon implementation and return to old work habits. Demonstrate the efficiency of the new process and share customer satisfaction with the changed “result” to gain commitment of the staff to follow the recommended changes.

8. Implement continuous process improvement.—Involve staff in continuous assessment, encourage continued data-gathering, and make process improvement the work of the team. Continue to develop the skills of all involved, so that their own motivation to do a good job, offer quality
service, develop their own skills and knowledge, and be appreciated by those they serve are maximized. Scholtes points out that “giving meaning, purpose, direction and focus to work” is a key role of leadership (Scholtes, 1998, p. 160). Ambiguity and uncertainty, unclear purpose and vision for the future are causes of lack of motivation in staff. Without a process improvement system, staff will feel powerless to control the quality of their work in a sustainable way. Individual efforts will last only as long as energy lasts, or an individual holds the ability to persuade others to achieve breakthrough thinking and embed them in how the organization accomplishes work.

**Challenges and Learnings** Libraries have not embraced process improvement and could be said to have developed cultures where improvement is not a strategic focus. Libraries have been viewed as a public good and are referred to commonly as “the heart of the university.” Library work and how it is accomplished has been the “purview of practiced professionals in power” (my phrase). The need for research on how work in any organization is accomplished has been largely ignored until recently. Some early proponents of applying research methods to increase quality attempted to bring systems and quantitative analysis to academic libraries in the 1960s (Dougherty & Heinritz, 1966). These successful studies led to the creation of automated systems that increased the efficiency of technical services and circulation. Implementing automated systems became the focus for process mapping, for design of workflow, and for delivery of improved access. The creation of automated systems appears to have overtaken the many other applications, principles, and practices of Total Quality Management. It is only recently that process improvement and the gains it can provide an organization have been discovered as an important system to embed in the reengineered organization.

In the mid-twentieth century, library culture consisted of an internal focus (Cullen, 1998), scarcity of resources, and a stable user population whose needs rarely changed. In addition, library education downplayed the need for research skills, and librarians developed a limited view of their work as unique and unrelated to the larger world of corporate and service institutions. With the advent of true competition and recognition that scarce resources can be reprioritized and reallocated to new enterprise initiatives, the development of process improvement systems can be advantageous. Customer demand has awakened the need for external focus. Libraries are now more interested in learning how to retain the value they add to the scholarly communication and education processes. This sets the stage for acceptance of process improvement as a key organizational system but, by no means, makes it easy to implement.

The skills involved in process improvement are not present in most library organizations. Library schools have not taught this particular re-
search method. Faculty do not prepare students to understand library organizations as a set of processes that produce outcomes. Data-gathering and analysis is usually limited to one course in basic research methods. Statistical process control methods are seen as complex and undoable, even though simple applications are available.

Process improvement initiatives require a commitment to learning that, if not sustained and supported, can lead to early abandonment of initial efforts. Efficient data-gathering methods are not well understood. Too much emphasis on the collection of large amounts of data can lead to exhaustion. The use of “triangulation” of data, simply collecting available or easily gathered data from several perspectives and using it to identify problems or root causes, is not appreciated. Some have acquired a surface knowledge of statistical methods and question this simplified approach. Living outside a culture of statistical research has led to an assumption that only major, time-consuming, statistically validated methods tested for reliability can be used to “know” what problems exist. Process improvement calls for some data gathering, but is not seeking to prove hypotheses by data alone. Piloting of new processes, comparing results to previous methods, and checking with customers provides the evidence needed to know that improvement has occurred. In most cases when undertaking process improvement, the staff involved are not at all surprised by what the data show regarding problems in the process. The resulting analysis and changes can lead to obvious improvements in quality as well as clear reductions in cost.

The concept of variation is not understood. Also, the concept that each professional has the right to accomplish her/his work in her/his own way, despite resulting in unacceptable variation, is prevalent. Professional and staff work habits have been passed down from generation to generation despite the fact that workers sense that there are better ways to accomplish things. Individual preference for approaches to work, schedules, and types of work have led to inefficiencies that no one wants to study for fear of losing independence and control over one’s work. The individual’s work preference takes precedence over the organization’s need for effectiveness and efficiency. Analysis of work processes feels like an evaluation of one’s work. Keeping the focus of the study on the process, and the systems and policies that keep that process in place, is a major challenge for those involved in any study.

Assessment of customers’ needs is a very new concept in library organizations, although customer service has always been at the core of a library’s mission. Starting a study by discovering what current, potential, and future users might want can be met with resistance. The resistance can come from fear that customers will want service qualities that the library is unable to provide—because of skill deficits or scarcity of resources. Staff are committed to serving customers but can have conflicts about changing work processes that they believe work well enough. Staff also can fear that
the changed process will result in loss or elimination of interesting jobs. All of these can be true. Staff must be prepared to engage in process improvement with the ultimate aim of helping the library to achieve its mission in the face of competition; to reallocate resources to new value-added services and products; and to achieve the library’s vision in the face of threat to its values. Support for retraining and learning must be provided. Understanding the differing work requirements can lead to appreciation for the new work challenges: managing processes, analyzing systems, assessing need, and evaluating results are different but needed skills of librarians. The recognition of increased customer appreciation also provides incentives. Implementing a process improvement system will confirm a commitment to remain strategically relevant in an environment of changing customer expectations.

The Performance Management System

Increased performance is the goal of any organization. A performance management system needs to support the staff in achievement of personal goals and recognize the integral role of the individual’s performance as critical to organizational performance. A good system provides staff with feedback on how to improve and encourages continuous learning. Most organizations have created performance management systems that rely on individual performance appraisal as the means of managing performance. Scholtes shares his negative views of performance appraisal: “Companies use the rhetoric of humanism, but their policies and practices are often based on distrust, paternalism, and a none-too-subtle cynical disregard for their employees” (Scholtes, 1998, p. 294). He asserts that evaluation of a person who has little control over the results he achieves is a waste of time. He contends, with Deming, that “no more than 4%” of an organization’s problems can be attributed to workers’ errors. What workers need are a reliable set of systems, processes, and methods by which “to design, develop, and deliver what customers need, when, and how (they) need it” (Scholtes, 1998, p. 304). In an appraisal system, identification of heroes and culprits replaces interest in improving systems.

Robert Mager and Peter Pipe (1970), in their groundbreaking work on analyzing performance problems, approach performance effectiveness management similarly. They propose that a “discrepancy” in performance and expectation be approached systematically by asking whether there is a “skill deficiency” or a “commitment issue” that is causing the “problem performance.” Each question leads to different strategies for changing performance. Assessment of skill issues leads to questions about the job training system, the frequency with which the task is accomplished, or alternative organization of work tasks. Redesign of work into simpler steps may be called for if complexity or disorganization are the problems. Commitment issues are investigated from the point of view of examining whether
performance is punishing (“do you get more if you do well?”), whether nonperformance is rewarded, or whether performance really matters (has a meaningful result). Mager and Pipe also advocate investigating what the obstacles to performance might be, that is, what in the system might be hindering a commitment to perform.

Rothwell identifies lack of feedback on consequences as the most persistent cause of human performance problems. No timely feedback, lack of assigned responsibility, lack of timely information, lack of knowledge, lack of rewards for performing, and lack of information follow close behind (Rothwell, 1996, p. 160). As he points out, most of these issues can be traced back as problems in the performance management system and not problems with the individual employees.

Senge points out the critical importance of dialogue and discussion in broadening team learning and supporting opportunities for self-motivation to influence performance. Ultimately, the reduction of defensiveness leads to natural creativity and innovation (Senge, 1990, p. 235–236). Providing the opportunity for conversations about library and team vision, mission, goals, and strategies and involving staff in setting performance standards from the customers’ viewpoint are some of the building blocks in a Performance Effectiveness Management System (PEMSystem) that will lead to improved organizational and personal performance.

Methods for Creating the System When designing a system that supports performance effectiveness, Scholtes has several key recommendations:

1. **Focus on outstanding performance**—Understand this from a statistical point of view—as outside the norm that could be expected from the system. Is there data over time that would show somebody to be significantly higher (positive outstanding) or lower (negative outstanding) than an average performer? Analyze what is behind the occurrence. Recognize the new market value of positive, outstanding performers and teach their methods to others or give them more latitude in job definition. Coach and mentor negative outstanding performers; provide them learning opportunities, greater structure, or a more appropriate position.

2. **Provide feedback to individual employees**—Focus on being helpful and supportive to the person; recognize that helpfulness is dependent on how ready the person is to receive feedback. Look on feedback as part of a larger system of relationships within work groups.

3. **Give direction and focus to the workforce**—If your work unit has clearly established and agreed upon directions, then everyone will know what to strive for. Create communication about mission, vision, values, and goals; share data about progress and utilize process improvement techniques to naturally support people’s work toward certain goals. Be clear about individual work focus.

4. **Provide moral support at a personal level for individual employees’ career goals**—
Provide ways for employees to assess, receive mentoring, and take advantage of personal motivation to fulfill career ambitions.

5. Be clear about career ladders and provide opportunities for people to choose to move forward—Keep people informed of the present systems and requirements.

6. Identify education and training needs—Be clear about needs for training on work processes and systems, individually focused training, and more general education and development of knowledge that can be applied flexibly.

7. Identify candidates for promotion or provide more leadership opportunities—Remove personal appraisal and subjectivity as much as possible from the promotion system or appointment to leadership responsibilities.

8. Foster communication between employees and their supervisors—In the team environment, communication should regularly take place among the members of the team about the progress they are making toward the team’s agreed upon goals, not just with supervisors.

9. If employees are unmotivated, investigate what happened or is happening to reduce their motivation—Recognize problems that may be affecting their work—personal or on the job, transitory or chronic—and see what can be done to help (Scholtes, 1998, pp. 328–357).

When designing the performance system in the team-based, learning organization culture, the UA Library formed a team to study best practices. The resulting Performance Effectiveness Management System (PEMS) aligns library, team, and individual goals, includes personal and team involvement in setting team and individual goals and quality standards (performance targets), integrates peer feedback and support for learning, and requires self-accountability for communicating progress as well as seeking help to solve problems when they are encountered (see Phipps, 1999). By adding the OD consultant specializing in compensation to the team, aligned principles formed the basis for both systems.

Charles McClure provided guidance in the development of the full PEMS, as did MetaWest, Inc., local consultants who guided the learning process for team leaders. The PEMS aligns each team’s strategic framework (team mission, vision, mission critical processes, and quality standards for each process) with the library-wide 3–5 Year Strategic Plan and calls for each team member to write performance and learning goals in line with the team’s plans. It also includes an assessment of competencies that will be needed in the team in the future. This list drives the creation of learning goals. A series of peer developmental reviews is scheduled every four to five months. Staff share their self-assessment of progress toward goals; recognition, support, and suggestions for improvement are provided by peers. A summary is then provided to the team leader. Three peer feedback meetings are aimed at increasing the success of the individual
by providing timely feedback and suggestions for overcoming obstacles that inevitably develop. Similar constructive feedback to teams on their strategic frameworks and progress toward quality standards is part of the three-month Team Report schedule.

Challenges and Learnings  The PEMSystem took almost three years to design and fully implement. Describing work done by teams as “processes” was brand new. Performance measures were unfamiliar and difficult to describe. Open assessment was a major culture change. Formerly, there was a focus on position, status, and specific assignments for work but little emphasis on what was to be achieved. The new focus on team and individual accountability required much conversation, practice time, and continual learning. The new and different terminology presented barriers. The new requirement to openly examine the results of work—outputs, outcomes, and quality—brought up predictable concerns (similar to those mentioned by Deming and Scholtes) of whether and when performance is under an individual’s control or when systems of work we have created may be contributing to the problem. For the team, performance management, data-gathering, and analysis skills proved difficult to learn. Many initial “learning goals” focused on developing these skills so that meaningful assessment could occur.

Staff involvement in the setting of team and individual goals was new. With the implementation of PEMSystem, individual accountability for openly sharing goals and progress with peers ran contrary to previous experience in the hierarchical culture. Old memories of the evaluative nature of reviews inhibited people from participating fully and using the system to learn, gain support, and improve. In addition, the campus system still requires an annual rating, although the library has successfully negotiated a basic rating of “Satisfactory” or “Unsatisfactory” as the minimum requirement for a “performance appraisal.” Merit evaluation is separately accomplished through the Career Progression/Merit System (see section on compensation below).

Overall the PEMSystem has accomplished what it set out to do. Individuals can clearly articulate their goals, identify milestones, and report progress. Teams and cross-team peers are much more aware of each others’ work responsibilities, and a large measure of support and recognition occurs in the developmental reviews and in the Team Report Sessions. The language of the organization is one of assessment and measurement—indicating a successful culture change to external focus on the needs of customers and the importance of caring and knowing whether intended results are occurring. Teams have become fairly adept at creating team strategic frameworks, including all the work processes for which they are responsible. “Stretch” quality standards are accepted as the appropriate approach to guiding continuous process improvement and forcing creative thinking and innovative approaches.
Challenges still exist in discovering and defining the right measures. Integration of the Balanced Scorecard (Kaplan & Norton, 1996) approach is slow but steady. Sometimes data are not easily obtainable; other times it is difficult to know how to assess outcomes of service or learning processes. Nonetheless, experimentation has led to a vast amount of learning, and the PEMSystem is robust and deeply embedded in the culture of the organization. The development of this system has made the need for a data management system and a budgeting system that provides cost center data very clear.

The PEMSystem aligns well with learning organization disciplines. It emphasizes personal mastery (a clear system for setting and receiving feedback on personal goals), team learning (team assessment of needs, planning of projects, monitoring results, and dialoguing about better ways to serve customers), and systems thinking (team reports include library-wide dialogue to increase the awareness of the need for whole-organization understanding and analysis). Each year, as all individuals engage in reflecting on their customers’ needs, the library’s strategic goals, their team standards, and their own performance and learning goals, shared vision develops more easily. But there are still questions. A recent climate survey conducted with the librarians indicated some dissatisfaction with the PEMSystem, although the cause of the dissatisfaction was not pinpointed. An assessment is planned, but this is a strong indication of the difficulty in implementing a performance management system, as predicted by Deming and Scholtes, even though the PEMSystem was intentionally designed to eliminate the negative aspects of performance appraisal. Open discussions of performance, requirements to align personal and organizational goals, requirements for measurement, and an expectation of self-accountability involve a major culture change (see Lakos and Phipps, 2004). Some still desire to have goals set and reviews conducted privately by a team leader—what Katzenbach and Smith refer to as reliance on the “political” process for rewards and recognition (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993, p. 24). In the larger profession, struggles persist to find meaningful outcome measures for which data can easily be collected. It is clear, however, that without the PEMSystem it would be impossible to answer the inevitable question, “How do we know that the team system is a better approach to accomplishing work?” Time and time again that question is asked, and results can be provided—reductions in cycle time, increases in quality (accuracy, availability, approachability), reductions in cost, and evidence of learning outcomes can be provided by all teams in the library to an ever-increasing extent.

The Compensation System

The main goal of a compensation system is “to provide just compensation for work, to allow people to sustain themselves in a decent manner with reasonable security (and) to retain qualified employees” (Scholtes,
According to Lawler, organizations can also look to their pay systems as a performance motivator if they are well-designed to reward value-added performance and the development of new competencies (Lawler, 1996, pp. 195–196). Historically, there are many factors on which to base a compensation system: pay for years of service, pay for positional power or supervisory span of control, pay for expertise brought to the position, pay for comparative market value of similar positions, pay for performance, and/or pay for skill and knowledge. Most systems combine several of these approaches. When designing a compensation system, it is important to align the principles of the system with organizational values. At the 2001 U.S. Office of Personnel Management Strategic Compensation Conference, the following were identified as objectives of a good compensation system: external competitiveness to recruit and retain; reward for skill acquisition; reward for performance through salary without grade promotions; internal equity among employees; pay for the person rather than the job; built-in controls and cost constraints; an understandable and equitable system; parallel career paths for managers and technical employees; flexibility to adapt quickly to market changes; and management flexibility to assign a range of duties (U.S. Government Office of Personnel Management, 2001).

Without clarity of a systems approach to compensation, employees are unsure of the reasoning behind pay differentials in the organization and morale can be affected. When viewed as part of an overall reward system, it becomes clear that, if pay is going to be used to provide incentive for joining or remaining in the organization or focusing one’s efforts on institutional priorities, its foundational principles ought to be made explicit. In today’s multigenerational and highly technological workplace, where needed skills are often brought to the organization by newer staff or learned on the job, a system of pay for performance and learning would seem to align better with organizational goals and a dynamic environment of change than a system based solely on seniority. Also, pay that follows value-added participation, rather than positional power, is better integrated with a team systems approach. Although much research in the field of motivation has concluded that pay systems are only a source of dissatisfaction and cannot motivate employees, Lawler’s research leads to a different theory. “My research showed a poor relationship between pay and performance. But it did find that when pay is based on performance, it can be a powerful motivator” (Lawler, 1996, p. 195). He attributes his first conclusion to the historical nature of most pay systems, which focus on job classifications, not individual performance. He also found that rewards had a major impact on the skills that individuals developed when the pay system focused on the worth of the individual employee rather than the worth of the position held. If the new team-based approach is to work, it is critical that the pay system reward people not for their position in the hierarchy but for working for the team and the strategic goals of the organization. If the compensation
system is to support the development of organizational competencies and capabilities, it would

• Focus on an individual’s skills and competencies (rather than his or her job)
• Be tied to the organization’s performance in ways that support its strategy and structure
• Support the organization’s architecture (Lawler, 1996, pp. 194–218).

Unionization and a strong cultural tradition of seniority and hierarchical pay structures may limit the flexibility the organization has in designing a pay system in alignment with strategic directions and needs, but every effort should be applied to rationalizing the compensation system to achieve desired results.

Methods for Creating the System Market-based compensation may be the best starting point for creating a compensation system that enables the organization to attract the necessary talent and skills to accomplish strategic goals, but market comparisons are tricky. Although local and national market comparisons can provide data to help design beginning salary ranges, these comparisons are based on generic job evaluations and do not take into account the cross-functional nature of teamwork, “where individuals are expected to work in teams, to do what is needed rather than what is prescribed, to manage themselves, and to make horizontal career moves” (Lawler, 1996, p. 201). They also do not reflect the market value of an individual whose skills and contribution may encompass more than the job requires. External benchmarking of comparable pay for skills, although difficult, would be a better approach. Instead of describing work in terms of elements, tasks, and duties, work is beginning to be defined in terms of roles and competencies. “Roles refer to expected patterns of behavior for people (Naylor, Pritchard, & Ilgen, 1980); competencies refer to knowledge, skills, abilities, and other attributes of people related to effective job performance (Heneman & Ledford, 1998)” (Heneman, Ledford, & Gresham, 2000, p. 204). Gross comparisons of similar titles in similar institutions fall short of this measure of a good market-based approach. Assessing pay for technological and team skills in the competitive marketplace appears to make more sense as library jobs become more engaged in understanding, utilizing, and integrating technological systems and more dependent on teamwork skills to accomplish strategic goals. Utilizing a “retention raise” approach can provide opportunities to keep key people who have developed the skills needed for strategic work and whose market value is evident from new job offers. This strategy has been selectively used at the UA Library, and a recent study showed that the extra investment did not result in the desired retention over the long term. Short-term results appear positive—allowing the library to retain key competencies for current proj-
ects. Any “retention raise” strategy needs to be designed to operate within the general compensation system principles.

In addition to market-driven approaches, cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) and merit awards need to be decided. Indexing cost-of-living increases to local or national figures is one approach to avoiding “losses” in actual compensation. Creation of a merit system calls for critical decisions regarding the basis for reward. What type of performance or what amount of loyalty is critical to retaining an appropriately skilled and committed workforce? What performance is critical to the future? How will it be measured? Keying the merit approach to the values and strategic goals of the organization will increase and strengthen overall system alignment. At the UA Library the Career Progression/Merit System (CP/M), designed by an internal OD consultant with the involvement of faculty and staff and in line with the PEMSystem, rewards overall high performance, demonstrated commitment to organizational values, and the application of new learning. Learning is the most important factor since the willingness and ability to learn and apply new skills is viewed as critical to future success. Candidates for CP/M self-identify and must show evidence that the application of new learning resulted in a positive outcome for customers. Team input must be sought on the personal decision to apply, support from at least three peers must be gained, and a positive decision rendered by a final Library-wide Peer Review.

Often the library compensation system has to fit into a larger campus system. Approaching classification from the broad-banding perspective can help where there is a need for flexible work expectations within the team structure. Broad-banding reduces employee reluctance to take on new opportunities for learning and is easier to manage than a complex pay grade system. Controlling pay costs within a broadband system is more challenging, and a well-developed performance management system is an important adjunct (Heneman, Ledford, & Gresham, 2000, p. 211). Movement within the broadband is usually premised on the acquisition of new skills that contribute to the overall competence of the library.

Organizations with faculty ranks must find a way to utilize the promotions in line with the overall compensation strategy. Promotion criteria are often culturally determined if they are part of a larger system (faculty, professional, or career/support staff) and may or may not be keyed to the need for building and rewarding strategic competence in the library. Ray refers to some of the problems inherent in relying solely on these systems for classified staff: “Promotional ladders in the state (staff classification) system are short, where they exist. For most employees, promotion is not often available as an option” (Ray, 2004, pp. 124). The library must develop a compensation system that is flexible, timely, and appropriate to the needs of employees, as well as the goals and constraints of the organization. In-
grade increases in salary that reward increased competence and performance are more complementary to a team systems approach.

**Challenges and Learning** Changing an embedded compensation system is extremely difficult. As employees engage in systems changes, they expect a reward for participating more broadly and deeply in the important work of the whole organization. Narrow classification definitions, based on task-based job descriptions and faculty ranks that reward seniority, can divide and confuse the staff as to the real priorities for their attention. If Lawler is correct that pay can have an influence on motivation, the pay system can be used to guide performance by making clear and visible what type of performance and what depth of learning are expected.

Benchmarking in a pay for skill and performance system is a complex task. Rarely are there truly “equivalent” library staff position classifications even among similar libraries, and individuals in these positions bring varying overall skills to the strategic work of the library. Each system has been developed within and politically shaped by a campus system where there is usually little knowledge of the intellectual and technical nature of library work. In addition, job and skill requirements have changed drastically in the past ten years, and classification systems—and their compensation appropriation—have not often kept up with the newly required levels of competence. Monitoring recruitment patterns, noting skills that competitive institutions require, is one way of recognizing market changes.

Recent research into the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) Salary Survey by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Personnel and Staff Development Discussion Group unearthed many problems related to noncomparative data collection by contributing libraries and resulted in some informal recommendations. I hypothesize that the reliance on comparisons within the profession, such as the ARL peer approach, has probably been detrimental in the long term. The sociotechnical work in the library has become more complex, and the true worth of library professionals is now being recognized by corporations who compete for the best master in library science (MLS) graduates. This latter trend can be a positive driver for utilizing a more accurate, external, market-driven approach to salary setting.

Gaining the permission of campus administration and the support of the campus human resources office to design and implement a different merit system is often a major challenge. Sharing the goals of the proposed compensation with human resource specialists and gaining their approval, in principle, is critical. The UA Human Resources Office had already developed a Career Progression System for rewarding “in-classification” acquisition and use of new skills. Adopting the tenets of this system as part of the annual award of merit was therefore accepted by the campus, even though other units still use a performance rating scheme. Previous acceptance of the library’s team system led to acceptance of the peer decision-making
process that drives decisions for merit. Funding the CP/M system required a commitment to allocate merit each year, with a substantial increase to base salary of $1,500–2,000, regardless of position classification or leadership status. Without this equitable approach and meaningful amount, the requirements of the system to self-identify, write an application, and seek peer support might reduce the feeling of “reward” and result in fewer applications. It is assumed that a majority of staff will apply for this substantial raise within a three-year period. Multiple rewards favor those most involved in new learning, an activity valued highly as work changes radically. Constant assessment of the impact of this merit approach on the total compensation is required. Increased overall retention provides one indicator of success.

This system does require constant education of the staff, and there are many who would prefer a simple seniority-based system, despite the strategic nature of this new approach.

The CP/M system also involves a major culture change that brings new challenges—for example, writing skills are not always up to the level required; and peer pressure sometimes results in “signature” support even though evidence is slight. Also, the peer review committee process is time intensive and onerous to some. Adjustments to the system have included the opportunity for verbal interviews with candidates where writing clarity is lacking, the opportunity for the peer review committee to interview peer signatories, and increased education of the staff on the criteria for application, which can reduce the peer review committee time.

In his assessment of the UA Career Progression approach to merit and its impact on changing the compressed (and low) nature of the salary system for a particular group, Ray asks, “Has Career Progression effectively changed the salary profile for employees in this (the Library Specialist Classified Staff) position? Keeping in mind the impact of cost of living adjustments, reclassifications and promotions, the answer is a definite yes” (Ray, 2004). In addition, he concludes: “In short: the staff at this library learn in order to take control over new task jurisdictions relative to instruction and information technology, while also seeking the personal mastery needed to work well in teams. As they do this they create an opening for support staff to take on some of the tasks that were once the hallmark of the librarian profession” (Ray, 2004). Support staff are then able to extend their competence and are rewarded in the CP/M system for learning and applying new skills that support the strategic directions of the library.

Radical change in the type of skills and competence needed in today’s library call for changes in the compensation approaches. Clarifying and communicating the principles of the compensation system, aligning the pay system with the performance management system, and building in the flexibility to reward the application of new skill and knowledge are critical for integrating the pay system with the other organizational support systems.
The Recruitment and Hiring System

The goal of the recruitment and hiring system is to identify, attract, and employ people who can commit to the vision of an organization, apply skills and competence to the unique work performed, grow and develop personally in the unique culture of the organization, and learn and apply new skills as work changes. As the supply of and demand for librarians and knowledge workers fluctuates, active recruitment strategies are needed (see ACRL, 2002). The potential for employee success begins with the recruitment and hiring system. Applicants should fully understand not only skill requirements but also expectations for flexibility, continuous learning, and teamwork. They should also learn about the compensation and performance management systems and be able to assess their own personal needs, styles, and climate preferences before deciding to accept positions. Culture fit is an important part of success. Assessment of culture fit should not be limited to evaluation of current skills and abilities. Attracting applicants who will bring different perspectives, based on their different cultural, ethnic, sexual orientation, or gender experiences, and who will assist organizational learning, is an important goal that will support the team system approach.

Methods for Creating the System

When organizations recruit, they look for job fit and culture fit, as well as assess future potential of new hires. Understanding the needs (present and future) of customers, as well as the skills needed to accomplish work processes is foundational to the design of the recruitment and hiring system. Position descriptions need to reflect current needs, as well as describe the expectation for learning new skills and bringing unique perspectives. Clearly defining the expectation for team approaches to work and clarifying that work assignments can change frequently will help identify a match between a potential employee’s preferences and the organization’s performance expectations.

Good skill- and knowledge-based job descriptions will include criteria that will identify successful candidates. Emphasis on joining a team, not on filling a position or undertaking a specific job, will help applicants to understand the requirements of employment. Understanding of and agreement with the criteria can make the team’s search process more efficient. Staff from the work team and from other areas of the library should be involved in the hiring process to demonstrate that the new employee will be joining the whole library. Commitment to vision should be part of the screening process. Those involved in the search team process will need training in screening, interviewing, and assessment of skills and abilities that will predict success. Each member can bring different perspectives, values, and experiences to the process, enhancing the possibility for discovering culture fit.

Challenges and Learnings

There is a strong cultural tradition of defining positions by delineating present job tasks and their associated qualifications
in terms of certification or experience. This tradition militates against the goal of a strategically focused hiring system: to attract people who can commit to the organization’s vision and goals and who are excited to develop new competencies not yet understood. Alignment of the organization’s needs and the recruitment and interviewing process is critical. All staff involved in the process need to be versed in the ultimate goal. Pressure to “fill the vacant seat” as quickly as possible as work backlogs should be avoided. Each vacancy should be reviewed carefully. Skills and capabilities needed on the team and in the library, now and in the future, should be emphasized when recruiting. Often entire team assessments need to be done in order to know what new talent is needed.

As libraries recognize the benefits of building a multicultural staff, reflection on current assumptions about “qualifications” need to occur. How much is experience a predictor of success in an organization that engages staff in constant change? What are “excellent communication skills” in a more diverse and global environment? How can widely differing work experiences and varying learning approaches be evaluated? How can interpersonal skills needed to succeed in a shared leadership and team-based system be assessed? Much research is still needed to improve the recruitment and hiring systems for our differently structured organizations. At the UA Library these questions are currently under study.

Designing an attractive salary system, marketing geographical benefits, and highlighting the advantages of working in a team systems environment can enhance the attractiveness of positions. Opportunities for learning, flexibility in assignments, and participation in shared leadership can all serve to recruit motivated new employees who are ready to participate in a leading-edge organization.

Other Critical Systems

As mentioned in the introduction, there are many other systems that are just as critical to support of the organizational structure, vision, values, and goals. An information system that stores and makes readily available quantitative and qualitative measurement data is crucial to support of the team system and the planning system. A technological infrastructure must be developed that facilitates the goals of the open, horizontal communication system. A budgeting system that is clear, easy to understand, and flexible must be developed to accommodate the planning and compensation systems, as well as team budget request processes. In this environment of continuing budget concerns, a fundraising system that involves all teams in assessment of needs and takes into account the few critical goals in the strategic plan is sorely needed. A marketing system that supports the library in communicating its relevance and its unique value to customers is also needed as competition develops and funding agencies look for evidence of return on investment.
Summary

Systems thinking is the “new management competency . . . the general reflex or habit of conceiving of reality in terms of interdependencies, interactions, and sequences. It is a way of thinking at the broadest level . . . or the smallest micro-level . . . (or) in between those two extremes” (Scholtes, 1998, p. 58). As organization development consultants contribute to improving “an organization’s visioning, empowerment, learning, and problem-solving processes” (French & Bell, 1999, pp. 25–26), it will be important that they utilize systems thinking. The design of organizations is complex. Without the development of organizational infrastructure systems that integrate fully with vision, values, and goals, the culture change necessary to work collaboratively in true learning organizations will be severely hampered. Much thought, involvement, experimentation, and assessment is critical to developing successful systems. The University of Arizona Library is just one research lab for studying system development in a team-based culture; the results of other experiments in organizational change will need to be studied to discover how these systems can be developed efficiently and effectively.

At the UA Library, the ten-year journey of change has resulted in recognition of the library as central to the campus goals for research and teaching. Staff have successfully assumed leadership roles both within and without the library. Constant restructuring, in anticipation of new needs of customers and in response to continuing budget challenges, as well as a formally articulated focus on performance effectiveness, reflects the flexibility, customer focus, and continuous learning we intended in this new organizational structure. Peer recognition, in the form of the success of our biannual Living the Future conference, regular requests to share experience and methodologies and to benchmark processes, and the library’s receipt of the ACRL Academic Library Excellence Award in 2000 attest to the importance of the experiment.

As we enter the 2004 fiscal year, the UA Library has made it a strategic goal to become a successful digital library, providing 80 percent of services and resources electronically by 2008. The organizational design of the digital library just now is emerging. New drivers for change have emerged. Insufficient physical space and the limited possibility of gaining new space will cause a rethinking of our mission and strategies—again. Desire for “personal control,” a new dimension in the 2003 LibQUAL+ARL survey, has become a dominant characteristic of customer groups, as was predicted in 1993. Technology has evolved to the point where “anywhere, anytime, information access” is a reality with Personal Digital Assistants and wristbands, PC tablets, wireless connections, streaming audio and video, and well-seamed, instant access to relevant information, regardless of publication source, but with evidence of reliability, source evaluation and veracity is just over the horizon. The same holds true for our competitors—some are ahead and
heading to new frontiers. We have new challenges (threats to fair use and privacy) and some not so new (the mergers and profit-driven strategies of the publishing industry) which pose a threat to our ability to afford access to the information our customers need. Technological infrastructure systems are now the focus of organization development, creating platforms with integrated systems that enable the type, level, and methods of access that customers need.

At the same time, a new generation of library workers is joining libraries as knowledge workers. Generation X and Generation Y employees bring with them different values and different goals. The type of work required in this digital library may require different types of collaborative work and the development of different consortium-based organizational structures and systems. As we create these new structures, it will remain important to create appropriate systems to support the new directions, the new values, and the new goals. And it will be critical for the growing body of OD professionals in libraries to keep up with the research on organization development and human resource theory. Assessment and improvement of the infrastructure systems will need to be ongoing. In this way, libraries can build organizations that can compete successfully in the information industry, thereby protecting the value of freedom of access to information, preserving the cultural record, and teaching information literacy in the twenty-first century.

NOTES
1. See the full report at http://www.library.arizona.edu/library/teams/fast/biblio.html.
2. On the work of Charles McClure, see http://slis-two.lis.fsu.edu/~cmcclure/.
3. See Ray, 2004, for a detailed description of the UA Career Progression/Merit System, its design, and the many learnings acquired thus far in its implementation over five years.

REFERENCES


Developing a Team Management Structure in a Public Library

BETSY A. BERNFELD

ABSTRACT
While much of the development of learning organizations within libraries has taken place in large academic institutions, Peter Senge’s theoretical concepts are just as valuable in public libraries, even comparatively small rural libraries. Utilizing the University of Arizona Library as a case study, a prototype of an organizational structure based on teams has been developed for the Teton County Library in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. This article includes a blueprint for a nonhierarchical, circular team management structure and describes the function, relationship, authority, and accountability of the library’s teams, as well as a vision for leadership. It also provides a model of teamwork incorporating Senge’s five disciplines into a single process that facilitates organizational learning.

A CALL FOR MODELS
Prototypes are essential to discovering and solving the key problems that stand between an idea and its full and successful implementation.

These are the words of management expert Peter M. Senge in The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization (Senge, 1994, p. 271). This classic treatise, originally published in 1990, draws a blueprint for an innovative type of organization—the learning organization—that is “continually expanding in its capacity to create its own future” (Senge, 1994, p. 14). Senge is founder and director of the Center for Organizational Learning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Sloan School of Management.

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In the evolution of the learning organization, Senge reported that U.S. companies and organizations are somewhere on the path between “invention” and “innovation.” Engineers say a new idea is invented when it has been proven to work in a laboratory. When it can be replicated reliably at a practical cost, it becomes an innovation (Senge, 1994, pp. 5–6). Along the path between the two stages, Senge says prototypes are essential to discovering and solving the key problems between idea and implementation. He calls for more prototype learning organizations.

The movement toward a less hierarchical, team-based organizational structure began in the business community, and Senge suggests a number of successful companies as models, such as Royal Dutch/Shell Oil, Hanover Insurance, and Herman Miller. At least ten years ago, the University of Arizona (UA) Library took serious note of the success of this management style in business. When Carla Stoffle took the position of dean of the UA Library in 1991, she was faced with budget cuts that amounted to $619,000 in three years, collection costs—especially journals—that had inflated by nearly 150 percent over the previous ten years, and a desperate need for an online catalog (Stoffle, 1996). One of her first moves was to form a steering committee to study workflow in the changing environment. The committee’s recommendation was to convert from a hierarchical management structure to a team-based organization. Stoffle said the “radical, fundamental change” focused on adopting a user focus, accepting the need for continual change, creating teams, and empowering frontline staff to make decisions (Stoffle, 1995, p. 6). She said the UA Library would not have been able to respond to the pressures without this structural change. Today, the UA Library is widely recognized as a prototype for organizational restructuring among academic libraries (Berry, 2002, pp. 41–42).

It is difficult to assess the progress of the team approach in public libraries, perhaps because public librarians are not as likely to publish works on this progress. The North Suburban Library System in Chicago is one organization that has been recognized in the professional literature (Hayes, Sullivan, & Baaske, 1999, p. 110) for development of a team-based organizational structure. Team terms such as “dialogue,” “shared vision,” and “systems thinking,” however, have entered the jargon of public librarians throughout the country. Public libraries appear to be positioned somewhere in the zone between the invention and innovation of learning organizations.

Certainly the same reasons that pushed academic libraries into the new organizational structure are present in public libraries: budget cuts, technology, an environment of constant change. Budget cuts have hit public libraries so hard that the American Library Association launched the “Campaign to Save America’s Libraries” in 2002. American Libraries magazine reported even more cutbacks and closures in 2003. “County, city, and community libraries are threatening to shut branches, shorten hours, freeze staff positions, and cut back on services at a time when circulation statistics
are up” (Eberhart, 2003, p. 20). The climate is right for public libraries to take a hard look at making changes in organizational structure as a means of surviving and thriving in a harsh environment. To do this, practical models are needed. While Senge cautions against one organization trying to emulate exactly another, he suggests that any organization has the potential to serve as an experimental laboratory where important questions can be addressed, new insights formed, and practical problems resolved (Senge, 1994, p. 272). It is time for public libraries to share experiences.

The Teton County Library Experience

Teton County, Wyoming, lies in the northwest corner of the state just south of Yellowstone National Park. It encompasses Grand Teton National Park and the high valley that is commonly known as Jackson Hole. There are a number of small towns within the valley; the largest is Jackson, with a population of 8,647 according to the 2000 Census. The year-round population of the entire county is reported to be 18,251, but that number easily triples with seasonal workers and summer residents between May and September. Because housing prices in Jackson Hole have climbed the same steep path as other resort areas, many year-round workers live in adjacent Wyoming counties or in Idaho. The Teton County Library thus serves a much larger population than 18,251.

Another factor related to library service in Teton County is the isolation of the community, especially in winter. The only university library in the state is in the southeast corner of the state, about a seven hour drive from Teton County. The closest major public library is in Salt Lake City, about five hours away in good weather. While Jackson Hole has an airport that is serviced by fair-sized jets and maintains primary two-lane highways leading out of the mountains in three directions, travel of any kind may turn hazardous during September through June. Telecommunications from the valley are like the highways—somewhat narrow; there is limited access to high-speed T1 or DSL lines. If people need access to a library or a fast Internet connection, they tend to count on the Teton County Library.

The backwaters of Wyoming have provided no sanctuary from the tempests currently hitting public libraries. The demand for ever-changing, sophisticated technology is definitely present, as are pressing requests for service that outstrip funding increases.

The people of Teton County tend to be highly educated (53.1 percent of people twenty-five and older hold college degrees according to the 2000 Census); many seasonal workers are college students, and many new residents have moved to the area from large urban centers, bringing with them a high level of technological savvy and expectations. In the space of six years, Teton County Library has gone from housing fifteen computers to more than ninety, to say nothing of the additional servers, the stack of
hubs, and the multitude of printers. Wireless access to the library’s network is offered to patrons with laptops, and, to keep everything safe, a firewall has been installed and virus protection is updated several times per week.

In addition to the high-tech crowd, the general population of Jackson Hole is full of recreational readers, and there is a high demand for library programs. More and more distance students utilize the library each year, as does a growing group of migrant workers from Mexico who fill service jobs and speak little or no English. In its most recent strategic planning process, the library has been charged by county residents to be an entryway into the community for Latinos.

Teton County Library consists of a main library (about 24,000 sq. ft.) in the town of Jackson and a small branch in Alta, Wyoming. Annual circulation is about 325,000, collection size is about 100,000 volumes, public Internet use is about 97,000 sessions per year, staff is comprised of 34 full-time employees and another 25 or so part-time employees, and the annual budget is approximately $2.6 million. It is a good size for a laboratory: small enough to be able to experiment, large enough to accommodate the tests.

The first team at the Teton County Library sprang right out of the woodwork, actually log work, as the library was housed in a little log cabin at the time. It was May 1994, and the present-day 24,000 sq. ft. facility existed only in blueprints. The library was just launching a political campaign to get a special use tax on the ballot to fund construction of the new library. At the same time, a fundraising drive was underway to pay for the building site. While the planning for these major events was being conducted in the back room by the director, Library Board, and consultants, the regular staff sat around a table in the reading room trying to figure out how to help.

The consensus of the staff was that they could generate a story a week for the local papers to raise the library’s profile in the community. The children’s department was already sending in press releases about its programming, and there were plenty of adult services that could be publicized. Some spectacular, at least showy, events could be helpful as well. The conversation in the reading room went something like this:

“It’s probably a dumb idea,” Sidney began. “I have a couple of llamas and we could march with them in the Old West Days Parade with signs that say ‘LLamas for LLibraries.’”

Cindy, an artist, quickly piped up, “I could make some banners.” Jenny offered a bag of colorful ribbons, someone’s boyfriend had a black powder rifle, the school librarian had more llamas, children from the summer reading program could join us, there was a fake handlebar mustache in the lost and found . . .

The once-dumb idea assumed lavish proportions, and, without even realizing it, the staff had launched the Parade Team.

In spite of the fact that the children got tired of leading the llamas, so
the adult services supervisor, whose fake mustache was falling off, was trying to control the reins of three llamas with one hand and hold the black powder rifle in the other, and the llamas all had to go to the bathroom at the same time in front of the judges’ stand, the library made the papers and won a second place ribbon plus $200 for the building site fundraising campaign.

Spurred by this triumph, the Outreach Team was created to continue the publicity efforts, and then the Move It! (to the new library) Team was created when those efforts were successful. With the exception of a construction project coordinator, no new staff was added to accomplish this additional work.

In the new building, once again there was no additional staff, in spite of the fact that there was one more public service desk, an online catalog, and a long row of public Internet machines and word processors to tend. Also, the Library Board handed over $400,000 to build new collections and called for a new strategic plan, immediately if not sooner, please. As the newly appointed library director, I briefly consulted S. R. Ranganathan’s classic five laws of library science (“Books are for use. Every book its reader. Every reader his book. . . .” [Gorman, 2000, p. 19]), and then went looking for a big sister.

**The University of Arizona Model**

What we found was a really big sister: the University of Arizona Library. I had noted Shelley Phipps’s name (assistant dean for Team and Organization Development at UA Library) on a journal publication about team management, so I contacted her. She generously gave me several hours of her time plus the proceedings of a recent conference on organizational change at the University of Arizona Library (*Living the Future*, 1996), which documented the UA experiment as a learning organization. (A selected bibliography regarding the UA model, which includes a citation for those proceedings, appears at the end of this article.) It may seem odd to partner a small public library with such a large academic institution—at the time UA had a staff of about 200 to our 20. But the two libraries had at least two things in common: Both understood the power of teams, and neither appreciated hierarchy.

After that first encounter, four basic concepts garnered from the UA experience were incorporated into operations at the Teton County Library.

*Cross-training*

Every member of the Teton County Library staff, even the director, was assigned for up to four hours per week at a desk or function that was not a primary work assignment. In the new library building, a minimum of four staff people was required just to keep the building open, and five if anyone wanted to eat lunch. The old library could be operated with
two staff people during evening and Sunday hours. Now there were more
spaces to cover and an extra public desk to monitor. Cross-training really
complicated scheduling, but it allowed an enormous amount of flexibility
in staffing public desks seven days a week, plus four evenings, as well as
during staff absences. We estimated that, without cross-training, we would
need at least a 30 percent increase in staff.

Instituting cross-training at a small public library was easy. We had just
come from a tight work space where everybody pretty much did everything.
Reference and circulation services had operated from a single desk, down-
stairs the children’s services performed its own circulation, circulation staff
helped out with technical services tasks, and a number of people worked
on outreach. Moving to a bigger building was actually a narrowing of focus
for our staff and did not require new training. Later, cross-training became
more challenging when new hires had to master two functions while only
spending four hours per week at their second assignment. At a large insti-
tution such as the UA Library, where the original organization structure
was characterized by many specialized positions, this transition must have
been harrowing indeed.

**Team Leaders**

Modeled after the UA Library’s Cabinet, Teton County Library created
a management team called “Team Leaders.” These leaders represented each
of the major functions of our library: administration, circulation, reference,
youth services, technical services, information systems, and outreach. They
met once a week and considered library-wide issues such as budget, poli-
cies, and planning. The thinking was that all basic functions of the library
would be affected by such decisions, and thus they should have a voice in the
process. Each function could lend a unique perspective to the discussion.
We envisioned this group as a circle, with the library director representing
administration and also serving as the team’s leader. Previously, under a
hierarchical model, decisions came from the top down and department
head meetings were rare.

**Modular Job Descriptions**

The Team Leaders created job modules for each of the major library
functions. These modules were incorporated into individual job descrip-
tions. For example, circulation has a module that lists all of the tasks re-
quired of a person whose primary assignment is circulation. The same
for youth services, etc. If a person is hired for circulation and assigned to
cross-train in youth services, his job description will contain the entire cir-
culation module and at least the basic tasks of the youth services module.
It is easy to streamline a job for an individual’s talents and goals and add
and subtract tasks as the library’s needs change. It also makes it clear to
the employee exactly what his responsibilities are. A “leadership module”
is included in the job descriptions of Team Leaders. “Customer service/
staff relations” and “personal objectives” modules are included in all job descriptions. While the modular job descriptions were not directly copied from the UA Library, it is our way of reflecting a valuable lesson inherent in that system: the importance of the individual.

Peer Review

Because of the significance of team member relationships in a team-based organizational structure, we broadened the scope of our traditional supervisor-employee performance evaluations to include a peer review. This broader approach to performance evaluation was especially important with people participating on more than one work team and, given the seven-day work week, not always under the direct eye of their primary supervisor. At first peer review was optional, but by now it has become an important, expected piece of our annual reviews. More recently, the review process has been further revised to incorporate a full 360-degree review (employees also review their supervisors) and one more important component—self-evaluation.

These tools served us well for the next five years, and I believe they were instrumental in our success in completing major projects, sustaining a tremendous growth in services, accommodating constant change, and gaining much more financial support from the county government. We completed our $400,000 collection development project; created and nearly fulfilled a five-year strategic plan; sustained a 15–20 percent increase in circulation each year; developed our reference and outreach departments; launched our computer center, young adult program, and Web site; vitalized our Library Foundation; and created an endowment fund. We doubled our staff and tripled our budget.

At that point (mid-2002), what Senge would call “balancing processes” began to impact our growth curve. We hit some limits. Service demands were still soaring, but the nationwide economic downturn was affecting our ability to increase funding. Office space in the new building was full, which imposed a physical limitation on staff size. All of the teams were larger, making meetings harder to manage and decisions more cumbersome. It was almost three years since the strategic plan had been created, and the shared vision on goals was blurring. Projects were encountering unexpected resistance. We were moving more slowly.

My diagnosis: We needed to improve our organizational structure. We needed a system that would work for a staff size of fifty, not twenty-five, and one that was in the midst of a budget and space crunch. Serendipitously, I noticed an article in Library Journal that mentioned Shelley Phipps and the continuing development of the UA Library as a learning organization. I looked up Shelley again.
SECOND ENCOUNTER WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA MODEL

I should have called for an appointment, but it was two days after Christmas and I did not expect to find anybody at the UA Library. I had just dropped in to reacquaint myself with the facility. To my surprise, Shelley Phipps was in her office and just happened to be looking for a diversion from a paper she was writing. I reminded her of our past meeting and launched into my latest list of questions.

Before an hour was up, Shelley had offered to mentor me in an independent study through the UA School of Information Resources and Library Science. My project was to consist of a directed study of team management theory, on-site observation of UA Library teams, a literature review of articles related to organizational development at the UA Library, and a study of UA Library written policies, procedures, and training documents. It was to culminate in the articulation of a model of a team management structure for Teton County Library that might be transferable to other public libraries.

Organizational Structure Diagram

During our Christmastime meeting in December 2002, Shelley Phipps made a puzzling recommendation. “Draw up your organizational chart,” she said. She promised it would be an eye-opening experience.

The UA Library organizational chart is upside down from the usual hierarchical structure of an academic library. The dean is at the bottom, not the top. Customers (students, faculty, and community) are on top. It emphasizes the library’s focus on the customer and the staff support role played by administration. Dean Stoffle has claimed that the flipped organizational chart has been instrumental in her organization’s success. “Because of the way we are restructured, we can change faster than we did in the past,” Stoffle told Library Journal. “It has allowed us to put as many librarians as possible in direct, one-on-one work with faculty and students” (Berry, 2002, p. 42).

On the snowy 1,000 mile ride back to Wyoming, I drew many little squares looking for a way to represent the organizational structure of Teton County Library. We did have a published organizational chart, a typical hierarchical diagram with the director at the top, and there is an underlying hierarchy in our organization. All teams have leaders and every person has an assigned supervisor. The chart is helpful at new hire orientations and once a year when we are making a case to the county commissioners about the need for more staff in a particular area. However, the chart does not adequately reflect how we do our work. It does not depict cross-training, it does not show Team Leaders and how they make library-wide decisions, nor does it represent any of our work teams that accomplish special projects.
I copied the UA diagram and inserted what I thought were comparable titles and terms from Teton County Library. Several things still bothered me. The director, at the bottom, was isolated by several layers from the patrons at the top. I felt the director of a public library should have direct, close contact with the community. Also, while the placement of the director’s position was meant to depict a supporting role for staff, it felt more like the full burden of the organization was weighing on my shoulders. I recognized the importance of being supportive; what was missing was the concept of empowerment.

I switched from drawing squares to drawing circles. Our original characterization of the Team Leaders was a circle, which represented our collaborative spirit and the important role Team Leaders played in decision-making. I felt it was empowering. I wanted to carry that theme throughout the entire structure.

By the time I reached Wyoming, I had completed a diagram consisting of four concentric circles. The circles demonstrate the roles of each of the teams, their relationships with each other, and how they work together to accomplish the purposes of the library.

In the outermost circle are the basic work teams, formerly departments, at Teton County Library. They represent the eight basic functions of the library and are thus referred to as “functional teams.” (An eighth team was recently added, our computer services team, after we opened a public computer center in the library.) Note that administration is considered a functional team immediately adjacent to the public, and it is also represented in the center of the chart. Functional teams create their own mission statements, goals and objectives, and guidelines and procedures under the broad umbrella of the library’s overall mission statement and strategic plan. They distribute the team’s work load, set the schedules of team members, and train members and cross-trainers.

The second circle shows special work teams, or “cross-functional teams.” These teams are made up of staff members across various departments. Members are chosen because of their particular knowledge, interest, or abilities in the specific area. Teams sometimes have a limited tenure; other times they exist indefinitely. Generally, cross-functional teams work under the authority of the Team Leaders. They often perform tasks related to the library’s strategic plan, and their objectives, and work plans are subject to the approval of Team Leaders. They sometimes work as think tanks or problem solvers, and they make recommendations to the Team Leaders based on their findings.

Collection Development is the largest cross-functional team, consisting of about twenty members. The group met frequently when the collection for the new library was being purchased, but now they gather only for periodic training sessions and to recommend the year’s collection budget. At
this point, their work is mostly accomplished individually. The Sirsi team is responsible for implementing and troubleshooting the new circulation system. (“Sirsi” is the name of the circulation software company.) Now that the system has been up and running for a year with most problems resolved, that team will be disbanding soon. Programming was formerly done by Youth Services, Outreach, and Reference teams working independently, which resulted in schedule conflicts and production bottlenecks. Now the various team members coordinate efforts by meeting regularly on the Programming team. Distance Education and Web teams are working on new initiatives for the library. Public Services allows the staff of the public desks a forum for dialogue regarding their special concerns. Personnel and Staff Appreciation focus on creating a model work environment in the library.

Before this diagram was constructed, cross-functional work teams were not only not on the organizational chart, but they were not in individual
job descriptions. Basically, they were unofficial add-ons to people’s work assignments, with little recognition and no compensation. If this chart accomplishes nothing else, it has at least uncovered that oversight.

Getting closer to the center is the circle of Team Leaders, the management team. This team now has ten members: all the functional team leaders (which includes the director), the assistant director, and the executive director of the Library Foundation, who sits in meetings as a nonvoting, ex-officio member. With the exception of personnel issues, policy-making, and budgeting, Team Leaders generally have final authority in decision-making.

In the center of the organizational chart are the sources of energy, the driving forces: the director’s vision, the guidance of the Library Board, the funding authorized by the county commissioners, and the Mission and Strategic Plan formulated by the community.

To demonstrate this model to my staff, I cut some pieces of foam core into four circles of diminishing size. I was competent in cutting the shapes and coloring and lettering the circles, but when it came time to screw them together, I panicked and turned the job over to my husband. He returned with the completed model within five minutes. He said it was no problem to achieve the correct alignment because each circle supports the one adjacent to it in its proper position. The same can be said for our management structure. The supportive role is not left to the director but is shared by all through the organizational structure itself.

That was the first of many revelations my staff and I have had about our management structure because of the model, which, by the way, sits out in my office and is referred to frequently—as opposed to the old hierarchical model that was hauled out once a year. The model makes me feel empowered and empowering, not burdened. Staff feel a sense of recognition for the work they have been doing on cross-functional teams, and they now see this extra responsibility as a way to advance in the organization. The model visually supports our consistent preaching that customer service is our top priority. The model has made it easy to explain to the Library Board and county commissioners how we operate and what we are doing.

**Team Learning**

Shelley Phipps also assigned me to read Peter Senge. My copy of his book *The Fifth Discipline* is riddled with underlining and margin scribbles. I also have a spiral notebook full of notes and a three-ring binder packed with chapter summaries. I am convinced of the importance of each of the five disciplines Senge describes: personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking. What remained unclear to me after all that study was the relationship of the five disciplines.

Senge stresses the importance of developing the disciplines as an ensemble, with systems thinking the integrating force. He seems to say that if
an organization cultivates all of the disciplines, individuals will at a certain point experience a shift of mind or “metanoia” (Senge, 1994, p. 13), a learning experience. The organization learns.

Senge teaches that all of the disciplines need not be developed simultaneously:

Though all are important, there are crucial questions concerning sequencing and interactions among the disciplines. What disciplines should be developed first? How can understanding in one area lead to mastery in another? How do we sustain movement along all critical dimensions and not become self-satisfied with our accomplishments in one area? These are the types of design questions that leaders must ponder. (Senge, 1994, p. 343)

This kind of design work called for a really big piece of foam core. I located a five-by-eight foot sheet at a local art and frame shop and trucked it to the library.

It does seem that there is a natural sequence to the five disciplines: An organization, through its personnel policies, training programs, and one-on-one mentoring efforts, develops the discipline of personal mastery among its employees. Individuals are then carefully selected for placement on teams. Teams are coached in the discipline of analyzing mental models; they study the systems archetypes, and they practice the techniques of dialogue and discussion. They use these skills to develop a shared vision of the issue or problem they are charged with resolving. From the shared vision emerges goals, objectives, and action plans. From this process and product the team has learned, and thus the organization has learned.

Figure 2 depicts the Teton County Library model of a process for team learning that incorporates and demonstrates the relationship of Senge’s five disciplines. A full-color, five-by-eight foot foam core representation of this chart is housed in the director’s office at the Teton County Library.

The value of providing this model, this ordered ensemble, is that it sets priorities and it poses a methodology for accomplishing tasks that incorporates all of the disciplines, thereby predisposing the organization to learning. This model communicates to staff that the personal mastery of employees is the first and foremost concern of the Teton County Library. “It is a pivotal moment in the evolution of an organization when leaders take this stand,” Senge writes. “It means that the organization has absolutely, fully, intrinsically committed itself to the well-being of its people” (Senge, 1994, p. 144). The presence of the large foam core model in my office serves as a blatant reminder to me as a manager that I must fulfill this commitment. Many tasks come immediately to mind, such as diverting more funds to the training budget, reevaluating job descriptions and pay scales with respect to work on cross-functional teams, improving our performance evaluation process, exploring the possibility of larger merit raises, and allowing specific hours per week for training.
In starting to implement the model, my first action was related to my own personal mastery: I composed a statement of my personal vision or purpose story as director of the Teton County Library. Senge defines the vision or purpose story of leaders as “the overarching explanation of why they do what they do, how their organization needs to evolve and how that evolution is part of something larger” (Senge, 1994, p. 346). Just as individual mastery is the basis for organizational learning in the model, individual vision is the building block of organizational vision. The Teton County Library’s vision is composed of the personal visions of the entire library staff, Library Board, county commissioners, and community. However, if the director’s role is stewardship of the organization’s vision, as Senge teaches, it becomes of utmost importance that the director have a strong personal vision of the organization and can articulate it. This task of composing a personal vision statement was more than a philosophical exercise or a physical grappling with foam core. It demanded a deeper sense of commitment to the library. I had to answer these questions: Was the library part of my life’s purpose? Was my personal vision consistent with the library’s direction?

In September 2003 I presented my vision to the Library Board and at a staff-wide meeting, and it will be incorporated into the employee handbook (see Appendix). The statement was quietly received; at least no one laughed. Whether it will encourage others to think about their own personal visions, foster a deeper commitment to the library, or have any impact on the progress of the library remains to be seen and may never be measured.
It was a turning point for me, however. I now recognize that my “job” is part of my “life’s work.” When frustrated, I go back and review the big picture of why what I am doing is worthwhile.

My second action was a proposal to re-create the Personnel Team as a combination of our existing Personnel Committee (which had dwindled to three members) and Management Structure Team (which met only once a year at budget time). The proposal was both a declaration of the importance of efforts regarding personnel and an acknowledgement of the inseparability of personal mastery from organizational structure. Team Leaders assumed responsibility for launching the refurbished team, a new role for them, and they greatly improved the haphazard method we used in the past for creating teams.

Team Leaders began by producing a written charge describing the team’s purpose, authority, and desired characteristics. They envisioned the team as a think tank and advisory group to the Team Leaders, and the team would respond to specific assignments from the Team Leaders. The Personnel Team would generally make recommendations, not decisions. Team Leaders specifically called for members who could be open-minded and maintain confidentiality. In spite of pressing needs for the team’s work, the Team Leaders set aside several weeks for the recruitment of new members. They sent e-mail notices and discussed the process at a staff meeting, calling for nominations and self-nominations. They carefully reviewed candidates before approving appointments in order to assure a broad and balanced representation of staff on the committee. The new team then underwent several team-building and training sessions on dialogue and discussion before they actually started work on specific assignments. Time has been carved from members’ work schedules to allow for participation. A Personnel Team module has been added to their job descriptions and extra pay will be considered. This excellent input will not guarantee excellent output, but the two must certainly be correlated.

Meanwhile, Team Leaders have begun training on the skills and disciplines that will foster their ability to learn as a team and arrive at shared vision. The first lesson was in dialogue. An issue arose regarding whether to add a new member to the Team Leader group—the coordinator of Latino Services. This was a straightforward, though fairly heated issue. It was first determined that the decision should be made by the Team Leaders, not the director, as that group would be most affected. Rather than immediately launching into argumentative discussion, the group followed the rules of dialogue and began its decision-making with a clarification process. The clarification led to analysis based on agreed-upon criteria, which quickly ended in a strong consensus.

The library also hired a consultant to assist in a library-wide prioritization effort. All teams are facing a burgeoning workload with no ability to increase staff. Tasks of lesser importance may have to be cut in order to maintain the
most vital work. The consultant utilized the team learning process model with the Team Leaders. He facilitated their creation of a shared vision regarding technology in the library. This vision is the first step in assisting the Information Systems functional team in setting its work priorities. The experience gained by Team Leaders in this exercise will be transferred to their individual functional teams. Each team will develop a shared vision of its role, from which it will begin work on prioritizing tasks.

The Teton County Library is positioned somewhere along the continuum of invention to innovation of a public library that is a learning organization. Without a doubt, the organizational structure has enabled us to accomplish enormous amounts of work very efficiently by empowering every staff member. People enthusiastically volunteer for cross-functional teams even without any system in place for additional compensation, which speaks to a high level of commitment.

We are still very much in the developmental stages, however. We spend more time on process (meetings, communication training, etc.) than any of us enjoy. We are far from masterful in the arts of dialogue, systems thinking, and analyzing mental models. We are profoundly grateful to the leaders at the UA Library for their continuing mentorship, and we are constantly seeking ideas from other libraries to assist our climb from a productive past to a successful future. It is our hope that the Teton County Library models can provide a handhold for more experiments in the public library field.

Appendix

A Director’s Vision

As Director of the Teton County Library, I see one of my chief roles as being steward of the organization’s vision and sense of purpose. That is, the Director must embody and articulate the Library’s vision. This requires the development of a personal vision of the organization’s purpose and direction, and it should be perceived as a part of her own life’s work.

However, an organization’s vision is not just the Director’s vision. It is composed of the personal visions of all those involved; in our case that necessarily includes the Teton County Commissioners, Library Board, Library staff and the entire community. The more closely aligned these personal visions, the stronger the organization is in accomplishing its purpose. On the other hand, it is impossible to lead if the leader’s vision is out of line with the rest of the organization.

Here is my personal vision. Can I be your leader?

1. The foundation upon which my commitment to the library rests is a respect for the community and a respect for the individuals who staff the Teton County Library. No, respect is not the right word. What is it that makes me always so happy to come home to Jackson Hole every
single time I leave? Why is it so hard for me to pass by any staff member’s
desk while you’re working and not interrupt you to say hello? Why dur-
ing my personal time am I drawn back over and over to manipulating
my mental models of library structures and events? Nope, this is love.
My commitment to the Teton County Library is not based on elevated
philosophy but personal love.

2. I have learned to believe in the power of teamwork. My first lessons came
from the library staff as we tackled challenge after challenge. Any good
idea I had was made grand by your input. I hope I have contributed to
your ideas as well. The library has accomplished so much because of
many people working together.

3. What I seek to create at the Teton County Library is a learning organiza-
tion. I believe in people’s innate desire to learn. I see that continual
learning is a necessity for the success of the organization and the com-
munity. Learning is very important to me personally.

4. I believe in the vision of democracy set forth by the Constitution of the
United States. Education is the key; the public library is the cornerstone
of adult education and the access point for uncensored information. I
often mistype “library” as “liberty.” Teton County Liberty. Perhaps the
two are interchangeable in my mind.

5. Growth is a scary concept as we look around us and witness its impact on
the environment and our quality of life. After experiencing so much
growth in service demands at the library, we probably all often wish we
could just level off for a while. However, I support and encourage growth
at the library. Who can challenge the value of more learning, of more
people reading, studying, knowing, thinking? There should be more
access to information; we should reach more community members. We
should do this in the most efficient possible way.

6. I have come to accept change as a fact of life for the library because it
is a fact of life for our society. And, given the current nature of that
change—growth of technology, transition to an information society—an
organization that traffics in information can expect to change more
than most organizations. A library must espouse change, develop its
own flexibility to adapt quickly, and keep a watchful eye focused on the
future.

7. A library is not just a storehouse of information. It is not a reflection of
a librarian’s interests. It should be a vibrant participant in the life of the
community and be constantly looking to the community for its mission
and direction.

I envision Teton County Library as a public library recognized for innovation and excellence.

Betsy Bernfeld, September 1, 2003
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From Measurement to Management: Using Data Wisely for Planning and Decision-Making

STEVE HILLER AND JAMES SELF

ABSTRACT
The wise use of data, information, and knowledge in planning, decision-making, and management can improve library performance. While libraries have long collected data, however, it is only recently that they have begun to use it effectively in library management. This article provides an overview of data use in libraries, organizational barriers, and support issues, as well as examples of libraries that have successfully integrated data acquisition, analysis, and application into management.

INTRODUCTION

Data can be defined and used in a number of different ways. Our simple definition is that data are records of observations, facts, or information collected for reference or analysis. Data may take a number of forms, such as transactions, observations, surveys, or interviews. All of these provide data, that is, observations, both quantitative and qualitative, from which inferences may be drawn by means of analysis.

Libraries have long collected data about library operations, primarily inputs such as the size of collections and staff or expenditures. However, the degree to which they were used, or could be used, for decision-making in library management varied widely. Recently, there has been a voluminous increase in library-related data, not only in transactional information from online library systems and electronic resources usage but also from efforts to gain more direct user input through surveys, focus groups, and other methods. Funding and accrediting bodies are also asking libraries to demonstrate
their impact on the user community through performance measurements that are based on outcomes and data. While many libraries recognize the value of using data for planning and decision-making, they are unsure how to collect, analyze, and apply the data effectively in library management.

This concern is not new. Libraries have struggled for years with how to utilize statistics and other data to enhance library effectiveness. Nearly two decades ago, Allen posed these questions at an international conference:

The failure of library statistics to solve all the problems that library management would have them solve may not, however, be entirely the fault of the statistics. A number of questions may be reasonably asked. Do librarians collect the appropriate statistics? Are the statistics collected either accurate or comparable among similar libraries? Do we ask valid questions of the data? And above all, do we know how to manipulate and interpret statistical information? All too often the answer to these questions is “no.” (Allen, 1985, p. 212)

Although many libraries have measured aspects of library activity or operations, why have the majority failed to use data effectively in management? What are the obstacles and barriers? Are there strategies and programs that have worked well, providing models from which we can learn? This article will review both the problems and successes involved in using data wisely in library management and decision-making.

**Traditional Uses of Data in Libraries**

Libraries have generated and collected data related to their operations for many years. Statistical data in such areas as expenditures, number of books purchased, and staff size were gathered and reported to appropriate administrative bodies or groups. Gerould was among the first to discuss the practical value of comparative data:

No questions arise more frequently in the mind of the progressive librarian than these: Is this method the best? Is our practice, in this particular, adapted to secure the most effective administration? Are we up to the standard set by similar institutions of our class? These questions are of the most fundamental type, and upon the success with which we answer them depends much of the success of our administration. (Gerould, 1906, p. 761)

Gerould further elaborated on the statistical categories that would prove helpful in library administration and management. These included facilities, collections, finances, staff, salaries, ordering and processing, cataloging, collection use, reference transactions, and departmental libraries. He began collecting and publishing data in 1907–8 from a select group of academic research libraries, and the practice continued (after his retirement) until 1962, when the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) took over the collection, compilation, analysis, and distribution of statistics. While these early statistics provide an invaluable record documenting the historical development of
American academic research libraries, there is little evidence on how they were actually used to improve library management and decision-making. While it is likely that comparisons with other libraries may have added fuel to budget requests for increased funding, local statistics were more likely to be used for library planning. For example, the best data for projecting collection growth and the need for expanded facilities “are found in the individual library’s statistical history” (Metcalf, 1986, p. 155). In his work on the Gerould statistics, Molyneux (1986) included library collection growth as the only example of how this data set could be used.

Comparative statistics were also used to develop standards, especially by library organizations. Such standards might specify the minimum number of volumes, staff, user seating, and other library measures. Efforts were also made to incorporate these standards or other statistical data into budget allocation, both at the institutional level and within the library. Library funding models or formulas such as Clapp-Jordan in the 1960s (and subsequent variants) endeavored to tie a recommended collection size to measures such as number of faculty, undergraduate students and majors, and graduate students at the masters and doctoral levels. Internal allocation models for collection development by subject area also used faculty and student numbers correlated to academic departments, as well as data related to publishing output, costs, type of materials, loans, and other use measures. While these were clearly efforts to use standards and data in library management, they were based on assumed linkages rather than research. Because these data were input centered, the link to outcomes were, at best, difficult to measure. As Clapp and Jordan admitted:

The formulas described in this article have been developed in an attempt to find a method for estimating the size for minimal adequacy of academic library collections more convincingly than can be done with existing criteria. It may be validly objected that little more has been accomplished than to transfer the locus of conviction from an unknown whole to the unknown parts, of which the whole is composed. (Clapp & Jordan, 1965, p. 380)

Of greater utility to libraries were local research studies that examined specific library services and processes undertaken in order to improve library performance. These included evaluating such activities as cataloging efficiency, card catalog use, reference services, collection use, interlibrary loan and document delivery, facilities and access, library systems, budgeting, and personnel. F. W. Lancaster’s influential 1977 book, *The Measurement and Evaluation of Library Services*, provided the first systematic review of studies designed to measure and assess library performance. Lancaster also covered the different methods that could be used for evaluation. He made the important distinction between broad-based input/output data (“macroevaluation”) and more focused analysis and interpretation of system processes (“microevaluation”):
Macroevaluation measures *how well* a system operates, and the results usually can be expressed in quantitative terms (e.g., percentage of success in satisfying requests for interlibrary loans). It reveals that a particular system operates at a particular level, but it does not, in itself, indicate why the system operates at this level or what might be done to improve performance in the future. Microevaluation, on the other hand, investigates *how* a system operates and *why* it operates at a particular level. Because it deals with factors affecting the performance of the system, microevaluation is necessary if the results of the investigation will, in some way, be used to improve performance. (Lancaster, 1977, p. 2)

In a subsequent paper Lancaster and McCutcheon went on to state,

Many of the studies conducted in the last ten years that can be grouped under the general heading of quantitative methods, are pure macroevaluation because they rarely go beyond producing data. In order to improve the service, we need microevaluation. . . . This type of analysis, although we use figures in our analysis, is more or less non-quantitative. It is interpretative. The investigator is very much concerned with using the figures acquired through quantitative procedures, to make reasonable decisions on what needs to be done to raise the level of performance. (Lancaster & McCutcheon, 1978, pp. 13–14)

*Library Automation and Data Generation*

The development and implementation of library-related systems for information retrieval, cataloging, and circulation coupled with the increased use of computers for quantitative analysis in social sciences helped move library education to a more systems-based approach in the late 1960s and 1970s. A new generation of library educators and librarians emerged who were equipped with quantitative skills and a structured social science approach to problem-solving that resembled Lancaster’s microevaluation. Swisher and McClure addressed the need for “developing a research plan and analyzing data in such a way that practicing librarians can make better decisions and improve the overall effectiveness of their libraries” (Swisher & McClure, 1984, p. xiv). They called this type of applied activity “action-research” and defined it as the “ability to formulate questions about library services and operations, collect empirical data that appropriately describe factors related to those questions, and analyze those data in such a manner that summary descriptive information will be produced to answer the original question and implement actions/decisions to increase library effectiveness” (Swisher & McClure, 1984, p. 2).

By the early 1980s automated library systems could generate copious amounts of data and reports on circulation, cataloging volume, and use of catalogs and bibliographic databases. It was envisioned that these systems would form the core data elements of the emerging Management Information Systems (MIS) and Decision Support Systems (DSS) that would underpin good library management and decision-making in the future. Heim
defined an MIS as “A system that provides management with information to make decisions, evaluate alternatives, measure performance, and detect situations requiring corrective action” (Heim, 1983, p. 59).

Decision support systems were seen as supporting broader administrative and management decisions. Dowlin and McGrath envisioned this scenario in the not too distant future:

The goal for the DSS is for the library director or manager to use a terminal to ask the DSS: How is the library today? The system would respond with such comments as: “terrible,” “lousy,” “fair,” “good,” “not bad,” or “great.” The questioner could then ask why. The system would respond with a summary report of all of the indicators using predefined criteria that would indicate exceptions. (Dowlin & McGrath, 1983, p. 58)

Yet at the same conference in 1982 where Dowlin and McGrath presented their view of how systems data would be used in management (Library Automation as a Source of Management Information), Shank expressed his doubts:

The whole system seems to be put into place as a perpetual motion machine all too often installed without there being any analysis of what to do with the data. . . It is not clear, what, if anything, can be done about whatever the data purports to show . . . Data rejection occurs because there is a lack of understanding as to what data and information will sustain decisions about the value of services. (Shank, 1983, pp. 4–5)

Shank’s comments certainly illustrated the need for the data to be analyzed, presented, and reported in a manner that could be easily understood and grasped by managers, administrators, staff, and other stakeholders. Burns noted in ARL Spec Kit 134 (Planning for Management Statistics in ARL Libraries):

The collection and use of management statistics is of almost universal concern to academic library administrators as part of their efforts to accurately describe their libraries’ performance, evaluate and enhance effectiveness, and plan for the future. Although the need for management statistics and the potential for their use in decision-making is acknowledged by research libraries, most are still searching for ways to reconcile internal needs with external requirements, and to develop systems for effective use of statistics. (ARL, 1987, p. i)

Two years later, Vasi observed in ARL Spec Kit 153 (Use of Management Statistics in ARL Libraries) that, while many libraries gathered statistical data, there appeared to be little use of such data in planning and evaluation and a distinct lack of analysis:

Despite the wide range of possible uses for management statistics listed here, the predominant use for statistics is for comparison purposes—either with other institutions or year-to-year within libraries. It may be more valuable to ask why statistics are not used more frequently for other than comparative purposes. Comparative statistics seem to be
ends-in-themselves rather than as initial steps in an analysis of a library’s operations or in quality of service. In almost all documents submitted, statistical reports were not accompanied by narrative analysis of the meaning of the data. . . . Why aren’t more creative, analytical uses made of the large amount of statistics collected? Another phrasing of the question might ask how library managers use statistical data to make decisions on basic library goals and management of resources. (ARL, 1989a, p. ii)

Although automated systems made the process of generating process-related statistical data easier, whether these were the appropriate data and how to utilize them were still problematic for most libraries. No matter how well the MIS or DSS models looked in theory, they rarely worked in practice to meet the needs of administrators and managers. As Young and Peters summarized, “the appealing elegance, simplicity and effectiveness of MIS as an ideal has been difficult to design and implement in the real world.” (Young and Peters, 2003, p. 1754). There were plenty of data, but they were not necessarily the right data and most library staff lacked the necessary interpretation, analysis, and presentation abilities to apply data effectively in management and decision-making.

McClure recognized these problems and pointed out several areas where more research was needed on MIS and DSS, including models and design considerations, hardware/software needs, and organizational impact and behavior. He posited a series of research questions, including, “What organizational climates and administrative assumptions facilitate the effective use of library MIS and DSS?” (McClure, 1984, p. 39). In examining the promise of microcomputer systems to improve management decision-making in libraries, McClure cautioned, “Regardless of the quality of and state-of-the-art of microcomputing hardware and software, the organizational context can preclude effective development of microcomputer-based decision making” (McClure, 1986a, p. 41).

Organizational issues rose to the forefront in McClure’s study on the use of cost and performance measures by middle managers in ARL libraries. He concluded that, “The views and attitudes expressed during these interviews frequently suggest that significant organizational change will be necessary before cost and performance measurement data can be integrated successfully into academic library decision making” (McClure, 1986b, p. 329). McClure went on to recommend professional- and organizational-level strategies to increase the use of data in decision-making:

1. Review existing management styles and organizational climates within the academic library.
2. Increase the knowledge level of the importance and potential applications of cost and performance measurement data.
3. Develop administrative systems that support the identification, collec-
tion, organization, analysis, and reporting of cost and performance measure data.
4. Establish reward structures for librarians who use cost and performance measurement methodologies for library decision-making. (McClure, 1986b, pp. 332–333)

Organizational Development and Data Use

Organizational development concepts began to be incorporated into library management studies and reviews by the early 1970s. In particular, strategic planning, workplace environment, staff development, decentralized decision-making, and organizational efficiency were emphasized as critical components of a management review. The Management Review and Analysis Program (MRAP) sponsored by ARL helped bring organizational development into academic libraries. MRAP was an institutional self-study that saw strategic planning at the heart of organizational change. Data for decision-making played a key role in the organizational environment as it was used in each phase of the reiterative planning and action process. In organizational development, this was known as “action research” and defined by French and Bell as the following:

Action research is the process of systematically collecting research data about an ongoing system relative to some objective, goal or need of that system; feeding these data back into the system; taking actions by altering selected variables within the system based both on data and on hypotheses; and evaluating the results of actions by collecting more data. (French & Bell, 1999, p. 130)

The elements of the strategic planning process in libraries as it evolved during the 1980s included the development of a mission, vision, and values statement along with an environmental analysis that looked at both external and internal activities and trends. The formulation of goals and objectives as part of action planning, implementation, and evaluation followed. Data collection and utilization as part of this process became critical in two areas: assessing current library performance and measuring progress toward achievement of goals and objectives. Gardner noted in his introduction to an ARL Spec Kit 158 (Strategic Plans in ARL Libraries) the “importance of success measures and of the need for libraries to develop more ways of understanding its programmatic strengths and weaknesses” (ARL, 1989b, p. ii). In one of the first books published on strategic planning in libraries, Riggs wrote, “The importance of maintaining comprehensive statistics, conducting well-designed surveys, and using reliable performance measures cannot be overemphasized. Data derived from these records/studies will be crucial when the library’s goals and objectives are being scrutinized” (Riggs, 1984, p. 20).

Hernon and McClure noted that this type of formative evaluation takes
the greatest effort because it “requires the existence of clearly stated library goals and objectives” and the “establishment of regular data analysis and collection procedures” (Hernon & McClure, 1990, p. 10). They emphasized that political and organizational barriers must often be overcome for evaluative data to be used effectively.

As strategic planning took hold in many academic libraries, the need for developing performance measures closely linked to library goals, objectives, and action plans grew. While this article focuses primarily on academic libraries, a number of public libraries had been working with performance measures since the 1970s (see DeProspo, Altman, & Beasley, 1973). These pioneering studies established a framework for performance measures based on practical ways to measure library services, user success as a primary factor in service quality, and development of similar measures that could be employed across different libraries to provide comparative information. Public libraries by their nature are more involved in community analysis and use demographic and other related data to tailor services and collections to the local population. Public libraries also compete with other public agencies for local support from the governing body or directly from taxpayers. This is an added incentive to demonstrate the economic and social value of the library to the community using relevant data sources.

Van House and colleagues provided this justification for developing and using performance measures in academic libraries: “Carefully selected and intelligently used, output measures enable librarians to determine the need to which objectives are accomplished, set priorities for resource allocation, justify services, and demonstrate the degree of library effectiveness to the library’s parent organization and other agencies.” (Van House, Weil, & McClure, 1990, p. 13).

User-Centered Libraries and the Culture of Assessment

The concept of the user-centered library emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s, fostered by strategic planning, total quality management, the external demands for accountability and measurable outcomes, and rapidly changing information and budgetary environments. Management strategies emphasized the need to focus on the customer and customer needs rather than organizational inputs and tasks. As Stoffle and her colleagues at Arizona stated:

Libraries must move from defining quality by the size of the inputs—and especially from valuing staff and collection size as “goods” in and of themselves. They get away from an internal professional evaluation of quality rooted in the context of what librarians agree that libraries do. All services and activities must be viewed through the eyes of the customers, letting customers determine quality by whether their needs have been satisfied. Librarians must be sure that their work, activities and tasks add value to the customer. (Stoffle, Renaud, & Veldof, 1996, pp. 220–221)
To accomplish this, user- or customer-centered libraries “collect data and use them as the basis for decision-making rather than rely on subjective impressions and opinions” (Stoffle, Renaud, & Veldof, 1996, p. 221). The keys to the success of the user-centered library can be found in understanding user needs, information seeking and using behaviors, user satisfaction, and providing the organizational focus and support on positive user outcomes.

Lakos, Phipps, and Wilson (2002) have promoted the concept of establishing a positive organizational climate for data-based decision-making through the development of a culture of assessment in libraries. Lakos’s definition summarized their work:

A *Culture of Assessment* is an organizational environment in which decisions are based on facts, research and analysis, and where services are planned and delivered in ways which maximize positive outcomes and impacts for customers and stakeholders. A culture of assessment exists in organizations where staff care to know what results they produce and how those results relate to customers’ expectations. Organization mission, values, structures, and systems support behavior that is performance and learning focused. (Lakos, 2002, p. 313)

Lakos has written extensively on the organizational components of a culture of assessment. He notes:

The prerequisites for a culture of assessment are supportive leadership, openness, integrity and trust. Developing positive assessment values and acceptance for assessment work is much easier in an organization where these prerequisites exist. Assessment is not about systems and tools, it is about people working together toward a common goal. (Lakos, 1999, p. 5)

According to Lakos, administrative leadership is critical: “The presence of visible leadership cannot be emphasized enough. Leadership is paramount for any organizational culture change to take hold, to be taught to the organization, and sustained over time until it becomes ingrained” (Lakos, 2002, p. 316).

It seemed as though all the building blocks for effective data use in management were in place by the end of the millennium. Library systems, microcomputer technology, and more recently the ubiquity of the Internet all helped provide increasingly powerful and easy to use tools for data collection and analysis. Spreadsheets and statistical analysis packages resided comfortably on desktop computers or local networks and were part of the library toolkit for measurement and evaluation. Organization development was firmly entrenched in many libraries with ongoing and iterative strategic planning, staff development, staff empowerment and reorganization, and a strong focus on quality and the user.

While some libraries had made the transition from measurement to informed use of data in management, the difficulties associated with using
data effectively remained for many libraries. Hiller (2002a) described the obstacles of organizational structure and inadequate leadership, librarian unease with quantitative analysis, lack of good data analysis and presentation skills, and the need to develop meaningful measures as major barriers to more extensive use of statistical data in libraries. The task of writing indicators and measuring performance turned out to be a complex activity with mixed results at best. Kyrillidou noted that “Performance indicators are being developed from data that can be easily gathered. Of course, what is easy to measure is not necessarily what is desirable to measure. It is always tempting to set goals based on the data that are gathered, rather than developing a data-gathering system linked to assessing progress towards meeting establishing goals” (Kyrillidou, 1998, p. 6).

The organizational issues centered on direction, leadership, communication, and support remained barriers. Covey expanded on these themes in her Digital Library Federation (DLF) study, *Usage and Usability Assessment: Library Practices and Concerns* (2002):

The results of the DLF study suggest that individually, libraries in many cases are collecting data without really having the will, organizational capacity, or interest to interpret and use the data effectively in library planning. . . . Comments from DLF respondents indicate that the internal organization of many libraries does not facilitate the gathering, analysis, management and strategic use of assessment data. The result is a kind of purposeless data collection that has little hope of serving as a foundation, for the development of guidelines, best practices, or benchmarks. The profession could benefit from case studies of those libraries that have conducted research efficiently and applied the results effectively. Understanding how these institutions created a program of assessment—how they integrated assessment into daily library operations, how they organized the effort, how they secured commitment of human and financial resources, and what human and financial resources they committed—would be helpful to the many libraries currently taking an ad hoc approach to assessment and struggling to organize their effort. (Covey, 2002, p. 58)

We live in a data-rich information environment that too “often far outpaces the ability to consistently, conscientiously, effectively and efficiently interpret the data and apply the conclusions and recommendations into various real-life decision-making situations” (Young & Peters, 2003, p. 1753). The following sections review data collection and analysis issues as well as providing examples of academic libraries that have successfully used data in planning and management.

**Data Collection, Analysis, and Reporting Issues**

**What Data Should Be Collected?**

Libraries have a long history of collecting data on the size of collections, expenditures, staff, and other input elements. Outputs (for example, tallies
of customer use of resources) are another part of the picture. Using ARL statistics as a guidepost, the only indicators of customer activity currently collected and reported are circulation, reference transactions, interlibrary loan transactions, and delivery of bibliographic instruction. All these data elements provide valuable information, but they are no longer deemed sufficient. In using data for management purposes, a multifaceted approach (or a “toolkit”) is advisable. As noted at a meeting of the ARL Committee on Statistics and Measurement, “different sets of data may be meaningful for different sets of libraries” (ARL, 2001, p. 3). It is only through using a wide variety of measures that one can hope to get a full and accurate reading of the library’s activities.

Since the early 1990s a number of libraries have moved beyond mere counting of customer activity to carrying out surveys to learn about their customers. Are the customers satisfied with the delivery of service? Is the library offering the right services? What would customers like to see in the future? Hiller and Self describe the series of independently developed customer surveys conducted at their own institutions, the University of Washington and the University of Virginia (Hiller & Self, 2002).

In 1994 ARL adopted a new goal, to “describe and measure the performance of research libraries and their contributions to teaching, scholarship and community service” (Kyrillidou, 1998, p. 8). This was the start of the ARL New Measures Initiative, which formally began activity in 1999. This initiative would inform data collection that would go beyond traditional input/output measures to capture use and impact of libraries. In 1999 eight areas of interest were identified: user satisfaction, market penetration, ease and breadth of access, library impact on teaching and learning, library impact on research, cost effectiveness of library operations and services, library facilities and space, and organizational capacity (Blixrud, 2003).

In the past five years many libraries have chosen to participate in a specialized survey called LibQUAL+™. This survey is an adaptation of SERVQUAL™, a service quality assessment tool introduced in 1988 by the marketing team of Berry, Parasuraman, and Zeithaml (Nitecki, 1997; Zeithaml, Parasuraman, & Berry, 1990). During the 1990s the library at Texas A&M University pioneered the use of SERVQUAL™ in libraries. In 2000 Texas A&M and ARL began a joint project to adapt SERVQUAL for use in multiple libraries. Twelve ARL libraries participated in the development and testing of the instrument during the project’s first year. The program, since named LibQUAL+™, has grown exponentially and now includes over 400 libraries of all sizes throughout the world (ARL 2003).

LibQUAL+™ is a gap analysis tool. Colleen Cook of Texas A&M explains: “It undertakes to measure library users’ perceptions of service quality and identifies gaps between desired, perceived, and minimum expectations of service” (Cook, Heath, Thompson, and Thompson, 2001, p. 265). The instrument is designed to be useful to the library administration on several
levels: identifying deficits in service performance at an individual library, allowing comparisons with cohort libraries from multiple perspectives, identifying best practices, and responding to pressures for accountability. Cullen has voiced some reservations about LibQUAL+™; she acknowledges its value as a diagnostic tool and for longitudinal comparisons, but she questions its appropriateness for interinstitutional comparisons (Cullen, 2002).

Many libraries are also conducting studies of their internal processes and developing performance standards. These studies look for answers to questions such as the following: How fast is a service provided? What is the turnaround time for filling a user request? What is the error rate? The cost effectiveness of services and resources is also worthy of study. What is the cost per use of a given electronic journal? What does it cost the library to secure a book on interlibrary loan?

Usability testing is another area of inquiry. Jeffrey Rubin defines usability testing as “the process that employs participants who are representative of the target population to evaluate the degree to which a product meets specific usability criteria” (Rubin, 1994, p. 25). Libraries are now offering many, if not most, of their products and services in an online Web-based mechanism. In recent years libraries (and other service providers) have begun to realize that the design of Web sites can greatly affect their functionality. The best way to find out if a Web site is usable is to observe actual users as they attempt to use it. In recent years numerous articles on usability have appeared in the library press, and in 2001 the Library and Information Technology Association, a division of the American Library Association, published a collection of case studies related to usability (Campbell, 2001).

A number of libraries have made efforts to improve their services and processing by learning from peer institutions. They have conducted benchmarking or best practices projects, observing other institutions and changing their own practices as appropriate (Pritchard, 1995; White, 2002). St. Clair points out that a benchmarking project can improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and credibility of an organization, but it should not be undertaken lightly. “Benchmarking is a complex process requiring a genuine search for improvement on the part of the initiating institution. A significant investment of time must be made” (St. Clair, 1997, pp. 210–211).

Libraries are also moving beyond input and output measures by focusing on outcomes assessment. The purpose is to determine what impact the library has on the life of its clientele. In the felicitous words of Roswitha Poll, there is a need to measure the “preciousness of library services” (Poll, 2003). The College Libraries Section Standards Committee of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) offers a more prosaic definition: “Outcomes are the ways in which library users are changed as a result of their contact with the library’s resources and programs” (ACRL, 2000).
Cullen notes that outcomes assessment is not a fully mature discipline: “Outcomes have proved to be a more difficult area of evaluation, and there is no work to date on standards for outcomes” (Cullen, 2002, p. 9).

In the United States, the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS), a major source of federal funding for museums and libraries, has become an active proponent of outcomes assessment, educating practitioners through publications (Rudd, 2000) and presentations at national library conferences (IMLS/PLA, 2002). Further, the IMLS is now asking funding recipients to utilize outcomes-based evaluation. The IMLS Web site explains, “A focus on measuring outcomes—the effect of an institution’s activities and services on the people it serves—rather than on the services themselves (outputs) is an emerging keystone of library and museum programs” (Sheppard, n.d.).

Prioritizing the Data

Research libraries are large organizations capable of generating an immense amount of complex data. The question inevitably arises as to the utility of the various data elements. Which data should be collected and reported? Libraries routinely collect the data requested by national organizations (for example, ARL, ACRL) and government agencies (for example, the Academic Libraries Survey of the National Center for Education Statistics), but these data elements may no longer be very useful to the individual libraries. Some of the organizations are revising their data collection priorities, hoping to increase the utility of the statistics. A number of individual libraries are engaged in a similar process, trying to determine what statistics they need.

One response to the flood of data is to identify the important data elements (those most crucial to the mission of the library) and to tally them as part of an overall index or scorecard. A few libraries have begun using an instrument called the Balanced Scorecard. This tool was developed in the United States in the early 1990s by two professors at the Harvard Business School; it was designed for the private sector, but more nonprofit and government agencies are now making use of it (Kaplan & Norton, 1992). The balanced scorecard allows a library to concentrate on a small number of measures. Taken together, these measures provide a quick but comprehensive picture of the health of the organization. The measures are divided into four categories, or perspectives: users, finance, internal processes, and learning and the future. Each perspective contains four to eight measures, and each measure includes a specific target score. At the end of the measurement period there should be no question as to which measures have met their targets.

Klaus Ceynowa from the University and Regional Library of Munster (Germany) notes the strength of this tool: “The balanced scorecard compels the library management to concentrate on the evaluations critical to suc-
cess in the quality, cost efficiency and promptness of university information provision” (Ceynowa, 2000, p. 163). In North America the University of Virginia Library has been a notable proponent of the balanced scorecard; its activities have been chronicled at conferences and in publications (Oltmanns & Self, 2002; FLICC, 2003; Self, 2003a, 2003b).

Assessing Electronic Resources

In the past two decades libraries have undergone a virtual revolution in the variety of resources and services offered. Bibliographic databases have superseded print indexes in libraries. In academic libraries print journals are in some danger of being eclipsed by the electronic versions. An extensive review of electronic library use research has recently been published by Tenopir (2003).

King and colleagues (2003) present evidence of this movement from print to electronic journals. They conducted a set of readership surveys from 2000 to 2002 among four distinct groups of scientists and found that scientists with wide access to electronic journals tended to rely on and prefer the electronic format. Goodman (2002) notes that at Princeton users insisted that the library offer journals in electronic format. He also reports that introduction of journals in electronic format appears to result in a doubling of use. A large study at the University of California, as reported by Schottlaender, revealed that “digital use exceeded print use by at least an order of magnitude” (Schottlaender, 2003, slide 2 notes). He also expects an extended period of transition: “the care and feeding of hybrid collections of print and digital content is likely to be with us for some time to come” (Schottlaender, 2003, slide 17 notes). ARL statistics show a rapid increase in the proportion of the collections budget devoted to the purchase and licensing of electronic materials. The latest figures indicate that the typical ARL library in 2002 spent 21 percent of its collections budget on electronic materials.

The use of these digital materials can be tallied by the computer; in theory libraries should have more data, and more accurate data, than was ever possible with traditional materials. Usage data for electronic resources have enormous potential for assessment and management. Once libraries know which materials are being used, and how much each use costs, it becomes much easier to make selection decisions or to make a case for additional funding (Luther, 2002).

Unfortunately there are problems in utilizing the data. Libraries are dependent upon vendors for the data, and some vendors have declined to provide it. In addition there has been a lack of consensus as to what data elements should be counted. Moreover, even if vendors are counting the same things, they may not be counting them the same way (Blecic, Fiscella, & Wiberly, 2001; Davis, 2002). As noted in a recent article, “Perhaps one of the biggest reasons why it is difficult for libraries to use electronic re-
source data for decision making is the inconsistency across vendors” (Duy & Vaughan, 2003, p. 16). The difficulties in acquiring reliable and comparable data from different vendors, who may be in competition with one another, has led some libraries to develop their own methods for estimating use of electronic resources (Duy & Vaughan, 2003).

In the past few years there have been attempts to draft standards for usage statistics for electronic resources. Initiatives from both ARL and the International Coalition of Library Consortia (ICOLC) have resulted in suggestions or guidelines concerning electronic usage statistics. The latest and most promising effort is by an organization called COUNTER (Counting Online Usage of NeTworked Electronic Resources). The COUNTER Web site states the rationale for the organization:

The use of online information resources is growing exponentially. It is widely agreed by producers and purchasers of information that the use of these resources should be measured in a more consistent way. Librarians want to understand better how the information they buy from a variety of sources is being used; publishers want to know how the information products they disseminate are being accessed. An essential requirement to meet these objectives is an agreed international Code of Practice governing the recording and exchange of online usage data. COUNTER has developed just such a Code of Practice. (COUNTER, n.d., par. 1)

COUNTER is an international organization that counts among its membership the major national library organizations and a number of major publishers and aggregators. It has specified that statistical reports should contain certain data elements and that they should be presented in a specific, easy to use format. COUNTER also includes provisions for certification and auditing. As soon as a vendor is fully compliant with the guidelines, COUNTER certifies them and adds them to the official list of compliant vendors. This provision will definitely benefit libraries by clarifying standards for reporting. In summary, COUNTER is offering much hope that libraries will soon have data that are intelligible, reliable, and comparable. Such data may soon play a central role in the library assessment process.

The situation is less clear when it comes to locally owned or locally mounted digital materials. A number of libraries are engaged in extensive projects of building their own digital collections. Many of the major institutions in North America are listed on the Digital Library Federation Web site. These libraries are digitizing varied materials and making them available to their clientele. Use of the materials may be completely unrestricted—anyone in the world may view and download them. In these cases, how should a library measure use of the material? There is no consistent practice. Libraries may count hits, page views, or sessions. All of these approaches have their adherents. There is also the question of who should be counted. Is remote use, perhaps from the other side of the world, counted
the same as use by an on-campus student? Are automated “visitors” (known as “spiders,” “crawler,” or “bots”) counted? Is inadvertent double clicking counted, or is it filtered out (Borghuis, 2000)? In the literature one can find a number of articles explaining how to extract data from Web log files, as well as other articles asserting that data taken from Web logs are useless (Bauer, 2000; Dowling, 2001; Goldberg, n.d.).

At the present time digital libraries seem to be in a developmental stage, with a focus on planning, creation, and experimentation. Only limited attention is given to assessment. However, Borgman and Larsen indicate the need for assessment: “A major challenge for digital library research and practice is to find relatively non-intrusive, low cost means of capturing appropriate data to assess the use, adoption, implementation, economics, and success of digital libraries” (Borgman & Larsen, 2003, par. 1). As digital libraries mature, assessment may well receive a higher priority.

The Limits of Quantitative Data

A word of caution is in order at this point. Although quantitative information is very powerful and important, it may not always be sufficient. There should be some feedback from users, some idea as to who is using a source. An undergraduate writing a paper can often substitute one source for another without harm; a research professor may not find it so easy to make a substitution if the first choice is not available. Therefore, librarians would be well advised to consider the opinions of faculty and other stakeholders, along with the quantitative data, as they make decisions about selection and retention of electronic resources. Qualitative information from focus groups, usability, and observation has been of immense use in understanding user behavior. Focus groups, in particular, have provided powerful context to enrich and complement other assessment efforts. The small group process encourages people to express their views, priorities, and concerns directly in a way that other methods cannot.

Gorman points out the limits and dangers of data collection; he encourages managers to supplement data with rich qualitative information. He is especially concerned that stakeholders, such as political and financial agencies, may misinterpret and misuse quantitative data. He argues for “a greater awareness among library professionals that meaningful data are contextual; and that meaning depends on interpretation” (Gorman, 2000, p. 118).

Notable Libraries

Many libraries deserve notice for their work with data and assessment. The following includes brief reports of two noteworthy libraries and first-hand reports from the authors’ own institutions. Assessment activities at these four libraries have been widely reported at meetings of ARL, the American Library Association (ALA), ACRL, and other library organiza-
tions. As an example, representatives from each of these libraries will participate in a program at the 2004 ALA annual conference called “Best Practices: Collection Management and the Application of New Measures for Library Assessment” (ALCTS, 2003).

University of Arizona: Measuring Organizational Performance

In 1991 the University of Arizona responded to a fiscally challenging environment by hiring Carla Stoffle as library director. Since then the University of Arizona Library has been a leader in organizational innovation and the use of quantitative information to improve performance. Simultaneously Stoffle also served several years as chair of the Statistics and Measurement Committee of ARL; she has been influential in moving both organizations into new areas of assessment and measurement.

The Arizona experience has been widely reported.² The University Library also cosponsors a biennial conference called “Living the Future,” which features innovations at Arizona and other libraries: “We wanted to share with colleagues our own successes and challenges as we transformed from an academic library of the 20th century into one that is preparing for the next millennium.”³

In an overview of their work at Arizona, Stoffle and Phipps note the importance of implementing an organizational performance measurement system. In 1998 the Library formally adopted a system known as PEMS (Performance Effectiveness Management System). PEMS is based on continual assessment of client needs, and it includes standards or targets for each activity. It is part of a cultural change that has taken place: “Developing a system approach to measurement helps develop an internal culture of assessment where decisions are guided by facts, research, and analysis” (Stoffle & Phipps, 2003, p. 26). Veldof described a number of assessment and data collection methods used to improve performance and summarized:

For the University of Arizona, data-driven research did indeed matter and continues to matter on a daily basis. Data and its collection and analysis are catalysts to move libraries to make changes, to measure their progress towards these changes, to direct efforts in ways that will give libraries the biggest impact for the lowest cost, and ultimately to greatly improve customer satisfaction. (Veldof, 1999, p. 32)

University of Pennsylvania: Dynamic Data

The University of Pennsylvania Library, another leader in the collection and presentation of quantitative data, utilizes an extremely interactive approach. Mounted on the library’s Web site is a repository of quantitative information called the Penn Library Data Farm. Its stated purpose is “to aid the measurement and assessment of library resource use and organizational performance” (University of Pennsylvania Library, n.d., par. 1). The Data Farm includes both locally produced data and vendor statistics
and the software needed to produce reports. It is described as “not a static warehouse of figures, but a more dynamic program . . . that equips staff to analyze and assess their work independently” (University of Pennsylvania Library, n.d., par. 1).

The Data Farm is an effort to provide “one-stop shopping” for library data. The site includes circulation and gate counts, database and e-journal use, survey reports, and various other data elements. It also allows one to run a variety of customized programs that process transaction logs, update use statistics, and generate Web use reports (Zucca, 2003b).

In tallying the use of electronic resources, Penn has chosen not to rely on statistics provided by the vendors. Zucca points out many of the problems with vendor statistics, for example, useless or low-resolution data, no consensus of definitions, no uniformity of metrics, and difficulty in retrieving data. He then describes Penn’s strategy for overcoming the problems: “Gather consistent, clearly defined measures for all e-resource use, based on mechanisms available to and controlled by Penn Library” (Zucca, 2003a, slide 7). To accomplish this strategy Penn has built measurement devices into its local architecture and created tools for storing, organizing, normalizing, and processing the collected data. Zucca (2003a) notes that much of the impetus for the Data Farm was external, especially as it relates to the library’s ability to justify use as a cost center. He provides the following reasons for development of data-based assessment at the Penn Library:

- Responsibility center budgeting: tax the schools for central services
- Expectation of flat or declining budgets
- High standards of accountability for cost centers
- Provost is a quantitative scientist
- Empirical mindset of library leadership

University of Virginia: Using Data to Inform Decision-Making

The University of Virginia Library has a long history of utilizing statistics and quantitative data analysis as part of its effort to provide high-quality services. Kendon Stubbs, recently retired as deputy university librarian, was a leader in the development of ARL statistical initiatives (Stubbs, 1981). In the 1980s the Library conducted a large-scale investigation of the effect of reserve use on student grades (Self, 1987). In the 1990s a two-year study of circulation patterns of newly acquired monographs led to a drastic change in the collection development policies and a reorganization of collection development functions within the Library (Self, 1996).

The Library administration formalized its commitment to data collection and analysis in 1991 when it established the Management Information Systems Committee. Among other tasks, the committee was asked to serve as a clearinghouse for computer programs that generate management data, to identify areas within the library where performance could be enhanced with management data, and to educate staff in topics relating to manage-
In 1993 the committee moved into a new area with the implementation of a comprehensive survey of teaching and research faculty. The following year the committee carried out a similar survey of undergraduates and graduate students. Surveys have continued on an approximately triennial basis, with faculty surveys in 1996, 2000, and 2003, and student surveys in 1998 and 2001. The first two surveys were on paper, but since 1996 the surveys have been administered and published on the World Wide Web.

From the outset the Library worked to maximize the response rates for the surveys. Faculty response rates have ranged from a low of 62 percent to a high of 70 percent; among graduate students the rates have been between 50 percent and 60 percent, and among undergraduates from 40 percent to 50 percent. The relatively high response rates have enabled the Library to use the results with some assurance of their reliability. The administration of the Library has been able to use the survey results to support implementation of innovative services, for example, an electronic text center, a Web-based library catalog, a coffee shop in the library, and a transition toward electronic acquisitions.

Survey results are particularly useful when they can be corroborated with other data. One example at Virginia concerned activity at the traditional reference desk. Tallies of reference desk queries had been in decline for several years, but there was controversy as to whether the tallies were reliable or merely a statistical fluke. However, the tallies correlated closely with a longitudinal analysis of answers on undergraduate surveys. It became clear that fewer undergraduates were making use of traditional reference services, and the Library was able to adjust staffing patterns accordingly.

In 2000 the practice of management information services moved to a new level at Virginia. The committee was disbanded and replaced by a three-person MIS department. The new department has responsibility for assessment, data collection and reporting, and usability testing, as well as certain budgetary tasks. Volunteers from various departments continue to participate in these activities, but coordination is the responsibility of the MIS department.

University of Washington: User Needs Assessment

The University of Washington Libraries (UW Libraries) is known for its extensive work in user needs assessment (Hiller 2001, 2002b, 2002c). Since the first large-scale faculty and student surveys in 1992, the UW Libraries, with strong administrative support and broad-based staff participation, has conducted extensive, ongoing assessment work with the user community, focusing on user needs assessment, priorities, library and information use patterns, and user satisfaction with the quality of library services and collections. The UW Libraries has employed a variety of methods to obtain information from faculty and students, including large-scale surveys, tar-
targeted surveys, focus groups, observation studies, usability testing, guided interviews, meetings, and both traditional and electronic suggestion boxes. Assessment results guide and inform the development and improvement of services and resources that support the academic community.

The library assessment coordinator (half-time) chairs the Library Assessment Committee, and together they coordinate broad-based assessment efforts and provide knowledge support for other library-related assessment activities. All areas within the Libraries are encouraged and supported to incorporate assessment and evaluation into their ongoing activities and programs, so that assessment becomes a routine part of library operations. Indeed, the phrase “culture of assessment,” which is widely used within the library community to define an institution where assessment is an ongoing, ingrained activity, was first coined at the UW Libraries in 1994.

The UW Libraries program of user surveys is unique among academic research libraries. Since 1992 large-scale surveys of students and faculty are conducted on a three-year cycle. These triennial surveys have provided invaluable information about how students and faculty use libraries, their library and information needs and priorities, and the importance of and satisfaction with the Libraries during a period of rapid change in the information environment. The large number of faculty respondents (1300–1500 per survey) is sufficient to conduct analysis below the aggregate level at the school and college level. Survey instruments, results, and basic analysis are provided on the Libraries Assessment Web site (University of Washington Libraries, n.d.)

The UW Libraries has used survey results to improve library services and programs based on customer needs. These changes have included renovating library facilities for student use and reducing collections space; extending hours for branch libraries and providing twenty-four-hour access for the undergraduate library; installing more library computers for student use; moving rapidly to desktop delivery of full-text resources; identifying student information technology support needs and working with campus partners to address them; providing standardized service training for library staff and student assistants who work directly with the user community; consolidating and merging branch libraries; understanding that information and library needs differ between groups and academic areas and planning services tailored to these needs.

Other broad-based surveys include participation each year in the Association of Research Libraries sponsored LibQUAL+™ surveys and a cycle of in-library use surveys conducted on a triennial basis since 1993 to determine which groups use the physical library and why they visit. LibQUAL+™ is a cost-effective complement to the library’s own surveys and results can also be compared with peer institutions. Use of in-library survey data has ranged from developing a service levels policy in 1995 that articulated services to
nonaffiliated users, to expanding the functionality of library computers in 2003 by adding application software.

Since 1998 the UW Libraries has conducted focus groups on an annual basis with faculty and students. Focus group discussions have identified potential problem areas and have led to action. For example, 2003 focus groups on the topic of information literacy confirmed the complexity of the information environment and the difficulties students and faculty have in finding scholarly information for their work. These findings helped initiate a redesign process for the Libraries Web site that will facilitate resource discovery and also intensify library efforts to integrate information literacy into curricular design.

The UW Libraries assessment efforts and ability to use results to improve library services were recognized in the decennial accreditation review of the university in 2003:

In view of the overall excellence of the Libraries, it should not be surprising that they have benefited from having visionary leaders. Planning, assessment, and continuous improvement are ongoing processes with broad staff participation. The Libraries’ program for the measurement of library use and user satisfaction has resulted in 10 years of longitudinal data on satisfaction rates and user behavior. This information is frequently referred to and used to modify existing services and plan new ones. (Northwest Association of Schools and of Colleges and Universities, 2003, III-5–1)

Conclusion

The outlook for the effective use of data in library planning and management is far more optimistic now than five or ten years ago. Not only are successful programs in place at several libraries that can serve as realistic models, but the emergence of a robust support infrastructure provides the guidance and expertise that can help develop and sustain data-based decision-making. Blixrud notes that, for institutions to do measurement and evaluation effectively, it takes

- Resources (that is, time and money)
- Individual and institutional buy-in
- Access to individuals to evaluate
- Expertise to conduct evaluation
- Project management experience
- Appropriate benchmarks
- Conceptual clarity
- Measurement and design requirements
- Instrument validity and reliability (Blixrud, 2003, p. 7)

Fortunately, many of these points are now being addressed. ARL has taken the lead in developing or sponsoring programs that assist libraries
(not just research libraries) in developing the skill base and organizational climate for effective support. Such programs as the Service Quality Evaluation Academy, a week-long workshop on how to use and understand quantitative and qualitative data, or the online lyceum on measuring library service quality, have reached many. The widespread use of LibQUAL™ across a broad spectrum of more than 400 libraries has done much to foster a “culture of assessment” and the collection of relevant user data. Other relevant ARL initiatives that are data-based include internal processes such as interlibrary loan and measuring use of electronic resources (Blixrud, 2003). ARL also contributes substantial programming for organizational and leadership development.

Other professional organizations have regularly included sessions and workshops on library evaluation, assessment, and data use as part of their conferences. The Northumbria International Conference on Performance Measurement in Libraries and Information Services has held five successful conferences since 1995, bringing together hundreds of library educators, researchers, and practitioners to discuss how to measure quality and apply it in libraries. Library and information schools are equipping not only students with these skills but also expanding their continuing education efforts for practitioners.

External factors such as accreditation, accountability, and financial support play ever larger roles in demanding that libraries demonstrate they operate effectively and efficiently in addressing the needs of their communities. Gratch-Lindauer (2002) notes that many accrediting agencies have moved from using input measures for libraries to outcomes-based assessment. Libraries that have established an integrated program of acquiring and using data wisely will be better positioned to meet these challenges.

Organizational development provides the structure for libraries to “institutionalize” the routine collection and use of data in planning and management. Administrative leadership and support are critical to fostering an environment that equips staff with the vision, tools, and understanding necessary to make data-based decision-making an integral organizational value. Yet, there is no one way to attain this. Each of the four libraries discussed above takes a different approach to achieving this value, one that is aligned with the culture, mission, goals, and objectives of each institution. It is also important to recognize that each of these libraries did not wait until all the organizational pieces were in place but started incrementally. In the long run, success will be measured by how effective each library is in using data wisely to provide the services and resources that support the learning, research, and information needs of its community.
NOTES
1. See http://www.diglib.org/.
3. See http://www.library.arizona.edu/conference/about.html.

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Organization and Staff Renewal Using Assessment

GAIL V. OLMANNS

ABSTRACT
A library that recognizes the need for and benefits of assessment of performance and service presents rewarding opportunities for staff to become more engaged in their work and to identify more strongly with the library’s mission and goals. The process and results of both quantitative and qualitative assessment efforts offer possibilities for employees to develop new skills, take on new tasks, and embark on new jobs. Integrating organizational assessment activities into the library’s routine helps the library to understand and more fully satisfy customer needs. It also encourages the library to anticipate future needs while remaining flexible enough to manage the organization’s response to change easily and effectively.

INTRODUCTION
Libraries have used a number of tools and methods to assess organizational development, performance, and service quality. The Association of Research Libraries’ annual statistics survey, LibQUAL+™, and other customer surveys, formal measures of organizational performance such as the Balanced Scorecard, and focus groups have been useful assessment tools. Most of the methods are formal and empirically based. There are also more qualitative and informal ways to assess the organization and make changes that improve the library. The University of Virginia Library has used a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to assess organizational change and performance. This article discusses in particular the revitalization of staff members who seek out or are encouraged to take
on new responsibilities and reengineered jobs. An important outcome of any ongoing assessment is for the staff to become more deeply involved in organizational change and performance, to feel free to be innovative and creative in their approach to their work, and to feel more fulfilled and satisfied in their jobs.

**What Is Organizational Assessment?**

Organizational assessment is a process whereby a consultant, an outside group, or an internal, appointed person or task force examines the organizational structure and workings of the library. The focus may include performance of the organization as well as of the staff. The purpose may be to identify important issues by developing an understanding of the mission and goals of the organization. It should include an effort to become aware of the organizational culture and values; should determine how goals are set, communicated, and achieved; and should discover the barriers to success. The purpose of the assessment is to develop a plan that addresses issues and problems so that the organization will become more efficient, streamlined, productive, and service oriented. Another important result is that employees, through participation, will develop new skills and become more involved, self-motivated, and satisfied with their assigned work. They will learn to think more creatively about their work, take risks by initiating change, and be more receptive to new ideas. The plan might consist of changes or adjustments to the current organizational structure or could result in a major reorganization of the library.

Library employees should be given the opportunity to participate in the assessment of the library as well as the formulation of plans to change the culture and the structure. Employees who participate in some way are more likely to engage successfully in new ways of doing things. They will be less likely to be alienated by change. They will be less likely to feel that change has been imposed on them without considering their informed opinions and suggestions about the work that they take pride in doing.

Some questions to think about when considering the inclusion of staff are

- Should all staff be involved? In what ways?
- How should the process be structured: bottom-up, top-down, some combination?
- How should input that is not useful or helpful be handled?
- Who is responsible? Who will guide the process and follow up?
- Who will communicate throughout the process?
- Who will report and make recommendations?
- Who is responsible for implementing approved recommendations?
- Why do assessment?

Libraries must be responsive to the constantly changing technologi-
nal, political, economic, and social environments. Advances in technology have made it necessary for libraries to look seriously at how they perform traditional functions. Technology has also dramatically changed the way libraries provide service. Libraries have had to respond to these changes with new initiatives that meet the users’ changing expectations for access to more online services and electronic media. Users are more computer literate, yet libraries must provide instruction in the use of the new technology to most users.

Technologies . . . continue to change and evolve at an ever-intensifying pace. On the one hand, these technology changes enable new services and resources that allow libraries to better meet the service and resource needs of their customers. On the other hand, this continual cycle of adoption, change, and new and/or enhanced services and resources creates a number of challenges—including assessment challenges—for libraries.” (Bertot and McClure, 2003, pp. 592–593)

The current political and economic environments require libraries to be able to justify their activities and funding to their larger constituencies—the university, or state government, for example. The rising costs of library materials and salaries for recruiting staff, along with the shortage of public funding and the difficulty of raising private funds, make it even more important for libraries to be able to demonstrate their contributions to their users. Issues involving copyright, licensing, freedom of information, privacy issues, and federal regulations regarding affirmative action, for example, all require vigilance and accurate enforcement and reporting. Bertot and McClure make a strong case for libraries to assess performance in order to respond to requests for justifications. They also discuss a number of reasons for reporting widely the results of these assessments. Among the reasons is the need for libraries to “articulate the importance of and need for their services and resources; identify the use and uses of their services and resources; and establish the value, impacts, and benefits that the community receives from the library services and resources” (Bertot and McClure, 2003, p. 592).

A number of social factors have influenced how libraries are changing to provide better service. A more diverse user population and globalization stimulate libraries to examine if and how they develop collections that represent many countries, cultures, and languages, as well as how they provide services to address the needs of diverse groups. The aging population has needs for continuing lifelong learning. Universities have made it a priority to become more involved with their communities by sharing expertise and providing excellent service.

Responding to these environmental factors requires assessment of organizational structure, development, and staffing so that libraries can change to become more efficient and better service providers. Before initiating new activities and new ways of doing things because of the changing
technological, political, economic, and social environments, libraries must assess the organization. Some questions to consider when embarking on such an assessment are

- Is the library organized to respond to changes in an efficient and productive way? If not, how should it be organized?
- What is the library’s decision-making process? Is the library positioned to make decisions quickly when changes are necessary?
- How can libraries be restructured to make use of and to capitalize on new technology, to respond to budget cuts, to anticipate changes in the environment, and to address the changing information needs of users?
- How can libraries develop and train employees to be able to respond quickly to change both in terms of managing and embracing change and having the right skills to do the new work?

Methods for Conducting Organizational Assessment

Libraries have been doing assessment for many years to answer questions about collection strengths and weaknesses, how they compare to peers in any number of areas (number of volumes added, serials, reference questions), and how they can be more efficient or productive. The Association of Research Libraries (ARL) statistical measures of input have provided data about library collections, expenditures, staffing, and services that have been used successfully to compare libraries. These data have made it possible for libraries to examine trends and to make assumptions about how services might change in response to use patterns, how resources should be used to better address customer needs, and how libraries compare to their peers in these areas. The data may be used as a stimulus to benchmark with libraries who demonstrate best practices in an area. Some libraries use the information as a challenge to do better or as a justification to seek additional resources in order to improve performance and provide better service to students and faculty.

Hiring a Consultant

Some libraries might find it necessary or useful to hire consultants. Unless the library has access to an internal consultant associated with the university, this can be expensive. Libraries have limited budgets to spend this way, but there are a number of organizations that offer consultants. University administrators can often make recommendations based on their knowledge of consultants in areas related to organizational assessment of performance and work analysis and redesign. Other libraries might be able to recommend consultants who have successfully contributed to their investigations. A consultant can greatly assist a library by taking responsibility for the entire project, including assuring an outcome and a plan for continuing improvement. Some of the responsibilities of a project consultant are
designing the approach to assessment, including organizational performance, workflow analysis and redesign;
planning and facilitating meetings;
• designing and delivering training to process participants;
• assessing organizational culture and the readiness of the library to embark on the assessment; and
• fostering collaboration and cooperation among participants. (Hayes & Sullivan, 2003)

Customer Surveys
Conducting surveys that compare customer group expectations with library performance has become more prominent in the past ten years. LibQUAL+™ is an example of a Web-based survey that was introduced in 2001 and looks at service performance gaps after measuring customer perceptions of minimum, perceived, and desired levels of service. LibQUAL+™ is offered by ARL and has had over 400 participants. It is the “first national effort on the part of research libraries to focus directly on the voice of the customer—to move from the inward focus on inputs and production capability to outputs and outcomes” (Phipps, 2001, p. 639). LibQUAL+™ provides data for libraries to learn about best practices and to benchmark services. Libraries can then make changes in their organizations to address specific customer needs that have to do with several dimensions of service.

Focus groups have also been used to generate discussions with customers and retrieve their reactions to services provided by the library. Focus groups can be done quickly with little preparation to get a timely sense of customer reaction. They can also be used as a follow-up to LibQUAL+™ or other surveys to clarify or learn more about customer expectations.

Committees
The library might choose to appoint a committee or task force and charge the group with examining structure, functional areas, and job assignments in the organization in order to assess performance. They might be asked to look at what the library is not doing that needs to be done and what it is doing that no longer needs to be done. The group would be expected to make recommendations and devise a plan for the library to begin to do the new things while phasing out the old in order to better serve users and to become more efficient.

Other Assessment Methods
Some formal methods libraries use to assess and measure the organization’s performance include the Balanced Scorecard, process improvement and simplification processes, and benchmarking peer institutions to find best practices. The Balanced Scorecard is a set of measures that reports on actions already taken by the organization. By setting targets in four main areas (financial, customer service, innovation and learning,
and internal business operations) of the library, and measuring progress toward meeting those targets, the library gets a comprehensive picture of overall performance. The Balanced Scorecard includes financial measures, and it “complements the financial measures with operational measures on customer satisfaction, internal processes, and the organization’s innovation and improvement activities—operational measures that are the drivers of future financial performance” (Kaplan & Norton, 1992, p. 71).

**Requirements for Conducting an Assessment**

People who work in libraries generally profess to care deeply about the work they do. Therefore, it is important to plan wisely and proceed cautiously when initiating an assessment project. Conducting a sound and thoughtful assessment provides the background and data necessary to make informed decisions about change. The following are useful steps to follow when performing an organizational assessment.

*Establish support throughout the library.* Communicate with staff. Articulate in as many ways as possible why the library is examining the organization and how the data and information that are collected will be used. Emphasizing the positive aspects of assessment helps engender support. Stress that the process of assessment uncovers better ways to serve customers and meet the library’s goals. Explain how the library will learn more about customers’ needs in order to make changes that allow more responsive action. Library leaders should ask the staff to help examine the work and participate in devising more efficient ways to serve customers. They can demonstrate to the staff that change can actually be fun by offering opportunities to staff to engage in new, groundbreaking activities. Share success stories with the staff. Show how some employees who have made innovative suggestions or contributions or who have assumed new, more relevant job responsibilities have become more involved and excited about their work as a result of the change.

*Ensure that the library’s managers support the assessment and can communicate the rationale to their staffs.* Library leaders should discuss thoroughly their plans to conduct the assessment with managers and solicit their input while demonstrating how it will benefit the library and individual departments. Both leaders and managers should engage staff in the process. Strategies that facilitate this communication include the following:

- Providing opportunities for participation by holding open meetings and inviting all interested staff to attend and contribute
- Distributing the e-mail addresses of the people conducting the assessment with invitations to ask questions and make suggestions
- Making presentations and sending updates electronically

It is inevitable that there will be some stress as the library proceeds with a close examination of work processes and functions. Employees feel
committed to their work and take pride in what they do. To alter their work assignments suddenly or even gradually can make them feel less valuable to the library and somewhat insignificant, as though their contributions thus far have not added value to the library’s mission. To alleviate some of the stress and concern that arises when the library embarks on this process, leaders should convince staff that their work is valued and that, even if their work changes, what they have done in the past has been valuable.

Demonstrate sensitivity during all phases of the assessment. The library has been organized in a way that historically satisfied the needs of its customers. There are often traditions to consider. Organizational culture—the way library employees have learned to approach their work, communicate with their colleagues, and think about the library’s purpose—has been established over time and cannot be changed easily.

Library administrators and department heads must communicate the need for change and talk with the staff about possible changes. It is important to include the stakeholders who do the work and understand the processes. They can make useful suggestions and will become part of the process.

Foster a culture of assessment and design an overall program of continuous assessment in the library to further monitor performance and success and make necessary changes to improve. A library might implement a formal ongoing tool or identify specific areas that need further study or assessment. Those areas might be targeted for process improvement projects. Staff participation in these projects is critical. Staff must become used to collecting and analyzing performance data so that they can contribute significantly to strategic planning efforts in the library. “Research library organizations must design internal systems that help staff keep current with customer needs, understand the real causes for dissatisfaction, discover what would increase satisfaction, and focus staff efforts on improving services and creating new products” (Phipps, 2001, p. 643). This approach creates an agile organization—one that can respond quickly to environmental changes and pressures. An agile and flexible organization is one that reacts quickly and effectively to events such as a budget crisis, hiring freeze, new technology, a change in higher administration, or a change in the emphasis of courses of study or other factors that have an impact on the library. An agile organization is also flexible with regard to fact-finding and decision-making.

Assign responsibility. Use a consultant, task force, or team to make sure the project stays on schedule. The schedule should be reasonable and determined by the length of time it takes to collect and analyze data, solicit input from staff, write the report, and make recommendations to be considered and approved by the library administration. The team should be responsible for communication and should keep the rest of the staff informed about the progress of the assessment.

Collect data that will help library leaders make informed decisions. Look at the library’s stated mission, goals, and strategic plan. Examine the budget
and how resources have been used to learn what the priorities have been. All of this information contributes to a better understanding of the mission and values of the organization. It can also be useful for targeting particular areas of the organization that need further study. The data can help to identify barriers to success. Follow through by distributing results of the assessment and discussing them widely in the library. The recommendations should be thoroughly reviewed and discussed and then approved, revised, or tabled by the library’s leaders. Generally a team or individual with the help of a committee and individual stakeholders will work on implementation.

Libraries must be sure to evaluate the results of assessment. Consider the reasons the library had for undertaking the assessment and consequent changes. Has the library met the goals and collected all the necessary information? Has the library implemented changes with success? Interview the stakeholders to find out if the assessment has allowed them to analyze the workflow and make changes based on the information they collected. Follow-up is usually the responsibility of an implementation team or the managers of the area. Review the success of the changes after they have gone into effect by seeking information from managers and staff in the areas that have been affected by the assessment. Personal interviews or written reports elicit information about what is working well and what is not working well. If the library has installed formal performance measures, see how performance has changed. Has it improved? If not, what adjustments must be made? By whom? Continue to review findings, and do periodic assessments. Make revisions and further changes as necessary. After this kind of approach is well established, issues and events can be addressed efficiently as they arise.

Continue to plan, test ways to measure and assess performance, and make changes based on the results of your assessment. Continue to employ methods that work: tools such as change management techniques, excellent communication, flexibility, training for future needs, planning, and participation. Continue to develop employees with an interest in and the skills to do measurement and evaluation, analysis of data and results, seeking and interpreting feedback, and change management. Develop employees with an understanding of organizational structure and development, theories of learning, individual and group development, analysis and intervention skills, and leadership development. Keep staff involved in assessment activities and be responsive to their career and development needs.

An example of a system-wide analysis of jobs that led to redesign of work by library staff is described by Hayes and Sullivan (2003) and was conducted by four suburban Chicago libraries—Cary Area Public Library District, Des Plaines Public Library, Ela Area Public Library District in Lake Zurich, and Warren-Newport Public Library District in Gurnee. In this project the library staffs were heavily involved in the outcome; they were trained to conduct the workflow analysis and redesign of jobs themselves.
The library directors shared a goal “to identify a means to create a work culture in which library staff would contribute high-quality performance and in which they would find meaning and purpose in the ever changing workplace” (Hayes & Sullivan, 2003, pp. 87–88). Results of the study include a deeper involvement on the part of staff in designing work and solving problems by looking at how the change will affect customer service. It has stimulated interest in changing work to serve customers better, and staff participate more in decision-making activities in the libraries (Hayes & Sullivan, 2003).

Another example of involving staff in an organizational assessment was done at Harvard College Library. The library conducted a systematic “self-examination with the goal of increasing productivity and innovation and making the work environment more satisfying” (Lee & Clack, 1996, p. 98). The library appointed a Task Force on Staff and Organizational Development and charged it with “diagnosing the current culture by identifying the present state, what elements were well positioned for change in the future, and what elements hindered future adaptation” (Lee & Clack, 1996). The task force encouraged all staff to focus on “the process rather than the content of work and at helping managers and staff become better at diagnosing and solving problems” (Lee & Clack, 1996).

**Assessment and Renewal at the University of Virginia Library**

It is possible to be successful using a more qualitative rather than strictly quantitative approach to organizational assessment. Libraries too often focus on getting the work done rather than on the needs of customers, the development of the staff, and the anticipation of future needs. Block suggests that there is an “obsession with measurement . . . not everything is worth measuring” (2002, p. 99). He says that there is a need for “flexible structures” to help design organizations that “serve both the marketplace and the soul of the people who work within them” (2002, p. 101).

The University of Virginia (UVA) Library is a practical example of how a library can use qualitative assessment to renew the staff and, consequently, the organization. The assessment process at Virginia successfully combines formal and informal methods of assessment. It includes self-assessment and is a more participatory approach to change.

The culture of the UVA Library has developed from a more conservative, traditional culture (typical of many libraries), in which there was a reluctance to take risks and spend resources on creative and innovative new ventures, into a culture where the emphasis is on customer service, assessment, innovation, learning, flexibility, change, and pride in accomplishment. The expectation among the staff is that things will not remain the same for long. Striving for a “fluid and flexible” organization has become the guiding principle. Innovation and risk-taking are valued and encour-
aged as evidenced by the early development of the Electronic Text Center, the Geospatial and Statistical Data Center, and research and development of the digital library. UVA took risks by dedicating staff and resources from other areas of the library to these efforts during times of financial stringency in anticipation of meeting future customer needs. Not always popular decisions, these actions have paid off by providing excellent service to the local community as well as the world community.

A significant part of the change in culture at UVA has been the expansion of a successful Staff Education and Development program that is forward-looking, addressing both the need for skills necessary to implement new strategies as well as skills needed to position staff for the future. Another significant contribution to the culture change is the unconventional way in which employees are given opportunities to take on new, challenging responsibilities that contribute to the library’s goals of excellent service. It is a process in which library leaders identify needs for staffing; assess staff skills, abilities, and potential; and reassign staff to new tasks. The intent is to rejuvenate and rehabilitate employees by assigning new responsibilities in the same department or a different area of the library. It is often a response to an employee who initiates change or asks to be considered for a different job. The program involves recognizing talent and skills, promoting general career development, and mentoring. It evolved from a number of staff opportunities and formal staff development programs offered by the UVA Library since 1980. The earlier programs included staff utilization studies of most departments. These studies featured job analyses and sometimes resulted in moving staff or changing job assignments. As a result of a study of the systems department, for example, library administrators conducted an assessment of systems support needs throughout the library. The most pressing need was for technicians who could troubleshoot hardware and software problems in each department in a more timely way than service was provided with current staffing. The outcome was that the library arranged for or provided in-house technical support training for current employees already assigned to departments who learned to troubleshoot computer problems and install software. These employees developed skills over time that made them qualified for higher-level technology positions as the positions became necessary and available. This program was initiated by the director of Library Human Resources with support from the library’s leaders. It eventually grew into a joint effort of the systems area and the library’s Training Coordinator.

The University of Virginia’s Staff Sharing Program provides another example of a program that capitalized on the experience and skills of staff while teaching new skills. It was conceived by the director of Library Human Resources in the early 1990s as a result of budget reductions, a hiring freeze, and the need to fill positions in critical areas of the library. The program has continued, but the purpose has evolved to provide opportunities for
library employees to fill high-priority needs in different library departments while they learn new skills. The objectives are to

- carry out library-wide priorities as established by the library’s department heads and directors;
- provide job enrichment;
- increase staff and organizational flexibility to address staffing needs; increase knowledge of the overall operation and organization of the library among staff; and
- improve interdepartmental understanding and cooperation.

The Staff Sharing Program was preceded by a Job Rotation Program, which gave employees opportunities to learn new jobs by actually doing them part-time as interns. Ryerson University Library provides another example of a more formal approach to job rotation. It is a part of their strategic planning process. They conduct a formal analysis of what needs to be done and who should do it. Making it formal reduces the “stigma attached to anyone wanting to change roles, to get out of an old job, but not necessarily wanting to move up the administrative ladder” (Malinski, 2002, p. 678). It is described as “a library development process with an overwhelming sense of community service that brings the additional benefits of personal job enrichment and job satisfaction” (Malinski, 2002, p. 680). The programs at UVA and Ryerson require assessment of organizational needs and strategic planning to address future needs. Both programs include developing staff to fill current and future staffing needs.

Organizational renewal at UVA is made possible because of the flexibility of the organization. Flexibility has been achieved by changing the culture to one that anticipates and accepts change. Change has become the norm. The organizational structure contributes to flexibility as does the new technology. A program of organizational development that includes staff participation in decision-making, empowerment, the use of teams, and developing the library as a learning organization has also influenced the flexible structure of the UVA Library (Oltmanns & Self, 2002).

The process of renewing the staff in order to keep the organization vital is one of moving people from one job to another temporarily or permanently. The library does not use a rigorous search and screen process in these cases, although consultation with the Equal Employment Opportunity Office occurs on a regular basis. Most of these assignments are made internally. If there is an actual vacant position to be filled, it (or another redefined position) is posted.

The Job Redefinition Process

An employee who is interested in learning and doing something new might self-select for reassignment by letting the appropriate person (supervisor, director of Library Human Resources, or associate university li-
brarian, for example) know that he or she is interested in a new initiative or assignment. Sometimes the employee has recognized a library need that is not being met because of a lack of staffing or resources. Perhaps the job would require the employee to develop new skills. Sometimes the employee is open to suggestions and will begin to learn new skills on his or her own. Alternatively, a manager might suggest that an employee be moved to another position for any number of reasons, such as the employee is better suited for it, the employee needs to do something more or less challenging, the employee has reached a plateau, or the employee wants to learn new skills. Sometimes a position becomes vacant or redefined, and it is not immediately obvious that there is an internal candidate who would be interested and successful in the role. In that case, the position is posted internally and interested employees may nominate themselves to Library Human Resources.

When managers become aware of employees who want to change their jobs, they should ask the following questions:

- What staffing needs does the library have to fill?
- Who wants to do more?
- Who is capable of doing more?
- How do the skills of the employee match the needs?
- How do the skills match jobs that managers could delegate? (Kanter, 1983)

A position is available for reassignment when needs are not being met in that particular area of the library. It could be an existing position or a newly defined position. Sometimes new positions are defined as a result of an employee developing new skills, embarking on a new initiative, or making innovative suggestions about something new that needs to be done or how to perform a task or service differently. Critical needs in the library or in specific departments, or reorganization of an area, might lead to new opportunities for employees. Sometimes a reassignment occurs as a solution to a problem.

The UVA approach to organizational development is supported by the work of Marcus Buckingham and others. Buckingham, of the Gallup organization, analyzed the workforce using a database of one million Gallup surveys of workers from around the world. His analysis showed that 26 percent of American workers are engaged in their jobs, 55 percent are not engaged, and 19 percent are actively disengaged from their work. The disengaged workers are performing below their potential and looking for new jobs. His conclusion is that the major challenge for the next twenty years will be the effective deployment of human assets. His advice as a result of his findings is to capitalize on the “talent and strengths” of each individual employee rather than on improving weaknesses (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999).
“Job sculpting” is another concept of meaningful work that supports the University of Virginia Library’s approach. It is a way of matching employees’ deep-seated life interests with particular work responsibilities. It matches people to jobs that resonate with activities that make them happy. It is a deeper exercise than merely matching skills with assignments. It requires managers to attempt to understand the psychology of work satisfaction. It is challenging for both managers and employees because many employees have not yet identified their deepest interests and cannot express what they are (Butler & Waldrop, 1999).

What Is Required of the Employee?

In order to create or move to a new job successfully, an employee must clarify his or her work goals and look for opportunities to learn the skills necessary to advance toward those goals. Clarifying personal goals is equally important. To do this, the employee might ask, What are my life goals? How can they be met through work? Working with the manager to establish appropriate training goals that will provide the necessary background to move into a more challenging position is also important. The employee should talk with the supervisor and others about interests and goals. The employee should find an advocate such as his or her manager or someone in library human resources or the library administration to serve as a guide through the process. This approach has been working at UVA for a number of years.

What Is Required of the Managers?

In order for a program like this to be successful, managers must be mindful of the development needs of their employees. It is helpful if they are on the lookout for opportunities to offer their employees. Managers who listen to what employees like or dislike about their jobs and respect the employees are better positioned to find exciting new challenges to offer them. Managers should

- be attuned to the employee’s unique job needs;
- build on strengths and interests;
- show employees that career development and personal growth are important; and
- work together with employees to customize future work assignments.

Following through might mean adding responsibilities or moving the employee to a different position. For this program to be successful, the manager must develop a closer relationship with employees. Library leaders should make sure that managers and supervisors understand this important role. Leaders should emphasize that managers are expected to be responsive to their employees and should seek to find rewarding work for them. Regular discussions with managers about staffing needs and some special
training in listening skills and coaching for improved performance might be useful.

**What Are the Next Steps?**

Changes in job assignments cannot be made without serious communication with the employee, managers, and anyone else who would be affected by the move. Some of the issues that need to be addressed are the following:

- The position must be identified and defined.
- The time frame must be determined. Will the assignment be temporary or permanent? If temporary, when will the situation be evaluated to see if it is working?
- Are there salary implications that must be addressed?
- Is it a change that is worth making?
- What will the impact of the reassignment be?
- How will this move affect other employees and morale?
- Is there someone else on the staff who might be interested in this job? If there is, that employee should be given consideration as well. A manager might need to interview more than one person who expresses interest and make a decision based on the interview and other information gathered.
- And last, who, if anyone, will do the work left behind?

When an employee takes on different responsibilities, it presents opportunities for library managers to reassign other employees to do the work left behind. Another result is that the library becomes comfortable with the fact that work that cannot be reassigned will not get done for a time or might be phased out.

When a decision to reassign an employee is made, it should be announced to all staff by someone in the library’s administration, for example, the dean, associate dean, or director of human resources. The new employee should meet all employees with whom she or he will interact and be scheduled for on-the-job training. More specific skill-based training should also be considered and scheduled, if necessary. Set a date within a reasonable time period to assess how things are going. At a meeting with the supervisor and the employee find out what is working well and what is not working well. Make adjustments as necessary. If the reassignment is not working, find a reasonable solution. Should the employee return to the former position? Always leave an out when making a reassignment by making it “temporary” or having an alternative course of action planned.

**What Are the Benefits of This Kind of Program?**

A program that acknowledges and balances employees’ work-related and personal goals by moving them into positions that better match those goals benefits both the library and the employee. It increases morale and
contributes to the development of motivated, productive, and loyal employees. There is a greater understanding of and appreciation for work done throughout the library by the participants because they are exposed to new functions and services. They are more likely to take ownership of a broader piece of the library’s work. The library is more likely to retain valuable employees because they are happier as evidenced by their deeper engagement, interest, and participation in library activities. Employees who are given opportunities to grow in this way have increased value in the organization because of what they learn and their ability to contribute more. Employees who take advantage of opportunities to change jobs show a “reduction in boredom, work stress, absenteeism, and turnover and an increase in innovation, production, and loyalty” (Malinski, 2002, p. 675). A program such as this one allows managers to groom employees to do the work that will be left after the aging workforce retires. (Malinski, 2002).

The guiding principle behind these programs is that the library’s “most important asset is the energy and loyalty of its people. And yet, many managers regularly . . . allow talented people to stay in jobs they’re doing well at but aren’t fundamentally interested in. You must first know the hearts and minds of your employees and then undertake the tough and rewarding task of sculpting careers that bring joy to both” (Butler & Waldroop, 1999, p. 144).

Another supporting point of view is that expressed by Hutchens:

People learn by doing. The challenge, then, is not how we get employees to learn. Rather, it is how we create a context in which they can encounter their own powerful and innate abilities to experience, reflect, connect and test. Notice the important difference between the two orientations. Organizational learning ceases to be something we “do to” employees. Instead, trainers become stewards of a latent, collective power that may be harnessed and directed towards our organization’s shared goals and aspirations. (Hutchens, 2003, par. 27)

**Summary and Conclusion**

Assessment of organizational development demonstrates the importance of gathering data and using data to support new ways of conducting the library’s business. It changes the organizational culture from one where traditional ways of doing things are valued and employees proceed cautiously to examine new trends and technology to one of support for innovation and risk-taking based on assessing customers’ needs. Organizational assessment involves collecting data, integrating it into the workflow, and making changes based on empirical evidence rather than what libraries think users need. Assessment assists libraries in identifying specific problem areas. It allows the library to conduct process improvement or process simplification endeavors to address these areas and make changes that will increase productivity and efficiency. Some of the results of following through on
assessments of organizational development are reorganization, reassignment, and reallocation of financial and human resources to accomplish goals. Assessing organizational development facilitates the creation of an agile organization prepared to tackle new problems quickly.

A library with a culture that recognizes the importance of assessment presents possibilities for staff to become more engaged and to identify more strongly with the library’s mission and goals. It provides opportunities for employees to develop new skills, take on new tasks, and try out new jobs. It develops employees whose work goals match more closely their life goals and, as a result, are more highly committed to the library’s goals.

Incorporating organizational assessment into the library’s work allows the library to satisfy more fully the needs of current customers. It also encourages the library to look into the future and anticipate changing needs while being flexible enough to manage the organization’s response to those needs. By addressing current and future needs of faculty, students, and staff in the most service-oriented way (focusing on their needs rather than the library’s needs to get things done), libraries gain their support and the support of the institution’s administration. This could lead to an increase in backing and encouragement, which can lead to new initiatives that make the customers happier.

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Redesigning Library Human Resources: Integrating Human Resources Management and Organizational Development

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Abstract
The human resources (HR) function within organizations has expanded beyond administrative and operational roles to include more strategic responsibilities. This change is requiring HR practitioners to take on new types of responsibilities in the area of organizational development—responsibilities that include redesigning jobs and work, developing performance management systems, managing change, and designing and restructuring organizations. Four strategies for integrating human resources management (HRM) and organizational development (OD)—job analysis, work redesign, team-building, and change management—are presented in this article along with recommendations on how to integrate HRM and OD to enhance the performance and capacity of the organization and its workforce.

Introduction
Like the library profession, the human resources profession is no stranger to change. Shifting workforce and labor market demographics, technology, globalization, economic uncertainty, and increased competition are factors requiring redesign of the human resources function to meet new organizational demands.

In most organizations, human resources (HR) departments have traditionally fulfilled two primary roles—administrative and operational—handling transactional activities such as benefits and payroll processing and employee status changes that have been the core activities of the HR department. While these roles remain important and necessary, technology and outsourcing have allowed HR departments to achieve efficiencies
in managing the various transaction-based activities of human resources (Drinan, 2002b).

With administrative and operational efficiencies in place, the attention of HR professionals has turned to other aspects of human resources management. Faced with rapid and constant change, many organizations are seeking improvements in workforce productivity in order to maintain a competitive advantage and, as a result, turning to HR professionals to redesign the HR function in fundamental ways. The end result is that human resources’ newest primary role is a strategic one as HR evolves from “being solely a provider of transactional services to an expert consultant,” according to Margaret Butteriss, editor of Re-Inventing HR: Changing Roles to Create the High-Performance Organization (1998, p. 41).

This reinvention requires HR practitioners to continue to manage administrative and operational activities while adding new responsibilities for developing and managing strategic initiatives that enhance the performance and capacity of the organization and its workforce. “HR is increasingly becoming an important part of executive planning and actions and far more of an integral part of management than ever before,” notes Butteriss. “We see such things as performance management, creating a high-performance organization, improving organizational and individual competence, creating flexible work teams, and satisfying customers’ needs becoming a major part of the strategic planning of senior management” (1998, pp. ix–x).

Within the last decade HR’s administrative and record keeper roles have begun to evolve into a more strategic one, which requires HR practitioners to use their knowledge of workforce trends coupled with knowledge of the business of the organization to work closely with senior management to develop long-term plans that link HR goals to organizational goals (Meisinger, 2003).

When this happens—when the goals of the HR department purposefully support overall organizational goals—the integration of human resources management (HRM) and organizational development (OD) has occurred. Integrating OD concepts and techniques into HRM activities through such strategies as job analysis, work redesign, team building, and change management serve the purpose of enhancing the performance and capacity of the organization and its workforce and ensures that HR practitioners are proactively meeting the needs of the organization (Meisinger, 2003).

**Human Resources Management in Libraries**

According to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), human resources management is “the design of formal systems in an organization to ensure the effective and efficient use of human talent to accomplish the organizational goals” (SHRM, 2002a, p. 2). Like other organizations, libraries of all types have traditional HRM activities such as
recruitment and selection, compensation, benefits, training and development, health and safety, employee and labor relations, and, in some libraries, student employment or volunteer management.

Within research, national, academic, public, and special libraries, the human resources function is structured in a variety of ways that reflect such factors as the size of the library and its view and philosophy of human resources. For some libraries the HR department of the parent organization or institution provides some or all HR functions for the library. Some libraries have an internal HR department and staff devoted to handling all or some of the library’s HR functions in cooperation with the HR department of the parent institution. In other libraries individual positions may be dedicated to HR functions. The most common position titles are HR or personnel officer, staff development officer, or organizational development officer. From library to library, the level of the position varies from line librarian or professional, to department manager, to associate or assistant director, while the reporting relationship also varies.

Whatever structure exists to support the human resources management needs of the library, many human resources departments and professionals in libraries—like their HR counterparts in other organizations—are playing increasingly strategic roles within library organizations by redesigning jobs and work, developing performance management systems, managing change, and designing and restructuring organizations. Such a shift from administrative and operational activities like approving job requisitions, reviewing job descriptions, and processing employee requests to these more strategic functions is most evident by the nature of the work of library HR professionals, work that increasingly reflects organizational development activities. In other cases, libraries of all types are working with organizational development consultants who provide services that may not be available in-house.

This shift to more strategic roles means that library HR practitioners are focusing on different kinds of activities and responsibilities. Using job analysis and work redesign tools and methods to determine the organization’s needs for jobs and what type of jobs and how to organize the work has taken a higher priority. Developing individual skills in all levels of employees to work efficiently and effectively in team structures has become more critical as libraries face the reality of smaller workforces, hiring freezes, pending retirements, and labor shortages. And managing the ongoing, relentless change—the permanent whitewater of the library and information profession—has become the skill most needed and valued. Many OD initiatives within libraries grow out of change management efforts when libraries seek to restructure organizations, redesign jobs and work, improve processes and workflow, and increase performance capabilities in order to enhance the organization’s ability to survive and thrive in a world of change.

According to the Society for Human Resource Management (2002b,
pp. 126–127), the primary intent of OD is to strengthen the organization. OD strategies fall into three categories: interpersonal, technological, and structural. Interpersonal strategies focus on work relationships between and among individuals and groups and touch on such topics as communication. Technological strategies focus on processes and include activities such as job design and analyzing workflow and human factors to achieve coordination and communication among departments. Structural strategies examine how the organization’s structure helps or hinders the organization in achieving its goals and may examine such issues as span of control and reporting relationships.

Mendelow and Liebowitz note that “OD interventions now are more wide-ranging and systemic than in the past. Whereas early interventions concentrated on the individual, interventions now involve the structure of the organization. . . . responsibility for OD is often considered to be a part of the human resource management function” (1989, p. 319).

**Strategies for Integrating HRM and OD**

Beer (1980) defines OD as a process that includes data collection, diagnosis, action planning, intervention, and change and views the purpose of OD as enhancing the fit among the organization’s strategies, processes, people, and culture. When defined as such, OD activities can and should be integrated into the HRM activities that support the organization’s strategic plan and goals (Mendelow & Liebowitz, 1989).

In this new strategic role, developing the ability to capitalize on the strengths of employees and make the workforce an asset to the organization has become a critical focus for HR professionals. The shift in focus has increased the demand for human resources initiatives, strategies, and programs that enhance an organization’s ability to recruit and retain highly skilled employees capable of ongoing innovation and able to effectively deal with constant change.

Four strategies created out of the intersection of traditional functions of human resources management and concepts of organizational development reflect select examples of when HR initiatives support overall organizational goals. The four strategies discussed here—job analysis, work redesign, team building, and change management—provide libraries with methods for enhancing the performance and capacity of the organization and its workforce.

**Job Analysis**

Libraries are among many organizations where jobs have undergone enormous change. Labor market shifts, budget constraints, enhanced technology, introduction of new library services and elimination of other services, and demands of customers require library HR practitioners to continuously use their expertise to examine the work performed by indi-
Individuals in libraries to determine if the organizational and individual needs are being met.

Job analysis has long been one of the most basic activities of HRM and is a “systematic way to gather and analyze information about the content and the human requirements of jobs, and the context in which jobs are performed” (Mathis & Jackson, 1997, p. 190). Job analysis informs recruitment and selection, affects compensation decisions, outlines performance goals, identifies training and development needs, and influences organizational structure (Lynch & Robles-Smith, 2001). The benefits of effective job analysis, according to Mathis and Jackson (1997, pp. 198–200) are the following:

1. Knowing what jobs exist, how many jobs exist, and what is being done, as well as what needs to be done, helps to inform HR planning. Jobs can be designed and redesigned to eliminate unnecessary tasks and duties or to combine responsibilities into logical job groups that meet needs and priorities.
2. Job analysis ensures that recruitment and selection are based on valid criteria by linking knowledge, skills, and abilities required to the tasks, duties, and responsibilities in the job description. Such information can also help to identify where to recruit for potential employees.
3. Job analysis information is often the basis for determining compensation and can help to prevent inconsistencies and inequities in compensation. In addition, job analysis information is used to help classify positions (exempt vs. nonexempt, represented or nonrepresented, etc.).
4. Effective job analysis helps to create job descriptions and performance standards that are useful tools for both training and development and for performance management.
5. Information identified in job analysis helps to identify health and safety hazards and working conditions that require special training or accommodation.

Job analysis involves collecting information about the characteristics of a job using one of several methods: observation, interviewing, questionnaires, or more specialized job analysis methods such as position or functional analysis. Organizations sometimes use a combination of job analysis methods (Mathis & Jackson, 1997; McDermott, 1987).

In collecting information about a job, HR practitioners often examine such aspects as work activities and behaviors, department or unit structure, interactions with others, performance standards, machines and equipment used, working conditions, supervision given and received, and knowledge, skills, and abilities required in the job (Mathis & Jackson, 1997).

Job analysis identifies three major components of jobs: (1) **tasks**, the “distinct, identifiable work activity composed of motions”; (2) **duties**, the
“larger work segment composed of several tasks that are performed by an individual”; and (3) responsibilities, the “obligations to perform certain tasks and duties” (Mathis & Jackson, 1997, p. 190).

Capturing such data through job analysis provides the information needed to develop job specifications and job descriptions. Job specifications—the knowledge, skills, and abilities required in the job—play a key role in recruitment, selection, and compensation decisions. Job descriptions identify “what is done, why it is done, where it is done, and, briefly, how it is done” (Mathis & Jackson, 1997, p. 192) and are key to the development of performance standards that impact performance management.

Using systematic job analysis to determine the exact job is far more strategic than simply writing or updating existing job descriptions. Performing systematic job analysis on a regular or periodic basis or under special conditions helps managers ensure that the jobs being done are the jobs that need to be done.

**Work Redesign**

Complementing job analysis is work redesign as another strategy that integrates HRM and OD. While job analysis often focuses on an individual job or job families, work redesign is a broader analytical process that examines work done throughout a department or unit or within the organization at all levels.

An excellent example of work redesign in a library setting was the work redesign project of the North Suburban Library System (NSLS) in Illinois. In the late 1990s the NSLS, an organization of 680 academic, public, school, and special libraries in northern Illinois, received a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant for redesigning work in NSLS libraries. Working with organizational development consultant Maureen Sullivan, NSLS director Sarah Long and four library directors spearheaded an eight-month project that guided work redesign at four different libraries. The ultimate goal was to analyze work and put new structures in place to positively affect member services in the library system and to “build the capacity of the organization” (Hayes & Sullivan, 2003, p. 87). “The work redesign process provides an opportunity for today’s library to stop and analyze how time and effort are currently applied in the organization,” write Hayes and Sullivan (2003, p. 88).

The NSLS project’s final report outlines a ten-step process: (1) select project consultant; (2) gather information; (3) conduct a planning meeting; (4) conduct a readiness assessment to benchmark the general indication of the library’s readiness for work redesign; (5) establish design teams; (6) train design teams in workflow analysis and work redesign; (7) have teams conduct workflow analysis; (8) develop process maps, which are graphic representations of the activities and tasks that make up a process; (9) present proposals to library directors and approved changes to staff; and (10)
develop a plan and timeline for implementing changes within the library (Hayes & Sullivan, 2002, pp. 7–21).

One major goal of the NSLS project was to be able to recruit and retain the best employees. Analyzing the work performed by staff identified ways to redesign work processes to create a more positive work environment. Among the benefits evident, according to Hayes and Sullivan (2003, pp. 90–91) were the following:

- Participants demonstrated a new sense of collaboration and cooperative learning that enabled them to learn critical skills and master new processes.
- Trained staff were able to identify key competencies for key programs and services.
- Staff shifted their focus to the big picture.
- Staff reexamined traditional jobs and practices and created new approaches and practices and new jobs.

While the NSLS work redesign project was conceived with a purpose to create a work environment that would attract and retain top-notch talent, work redesign in libraries can occur for a wide variety of reasons. Work redesign can also be used in libraries when units or libraries are merged, when new services are initiated by a unit or library, or when costs need to be reduced. Information technology and the introduction of new electronic services are other factors that often lead work redesign through the implementation of new systems that change workflows and processes or through the introduction of new digital services.

Work redesign is akin to process improvement and can be used as a dynamic tool that involves employees in examining and refining purpose and shifting the focus to customers. In the corporate world, work redesign is often used to streamline processes, increase efficiency and productivity, and reduce costs while maintaining quality and service and competitiveness.

Work redesign initiatives can result in a number of outcomes, according to Lemmer and Brent (2001), including increased productivity and output per employee, improved morale, decreased absenteeism, improved safety, more improvement initiatives, decreased inventory costs, faster cycle times, reduction of waste, and increased customer satisfaction. Involving employees and managers in work redesign can improve service, increase efficiency, and reduce costs as well as enhance employee capabilities and increase organizational capacity.

Team-Building

Teams emerged in libraries several years ago and have rapidly become a key work unit used in libraries of all types and sizes. Among Fortune 1,000 companies, the use of self-managed work teams (SMWTs) grew from 28
percent in 1989 to 72 percent in 1999 (Yandrick, 2001, p. 138). Such a significant change in corporations reflects substantially changed views about hierarchy, management, and employee involvement and contributions and the impact these have on the bottom line, in addition to reflecting a willingness to invest in making major changes in the ways in which work is organized and accomplished within the organization. In corporations SMWTs have become the stuff of legend in areas such as quality improvement, resulting in “production increases, waste reduction and accelerated product-development cycles” (Yandrick, 2001, p. 138).

While team contributions can have dramatic positive effects, there are also instances where teams sometimes fail to accomplish their objective or to master the process to work together effectively. In addition to organizational support, both Joinson (1999) and Yandrick (2001) emphasize that what can make a difference between success and failure of a team is adequate training for team members in interpersonal skills, effective communication, active listening, problem-solving, and conflict resolution.

Many fail to understand how and why teams are different from other work units such as a department or committee. Teams revolve around six basic concepts as outlined by Katzenbach and Smith (1999). Generally small in number (less than twelve members), “no team performs without the complementary skills required for success. Teams must have a common purpose, common set of specific performance goals, and a commonly agreed upon working approach. Finally, teams must hold one another mutually accountable for their performance” (Katzenbach & Smith, 1999, pp. xix–xx).

The mutual accountability is perhaps the most significant difference. In most other work groups, accountability is to a direct supervisor who oversees the work group or to the person who appointed the committee; being accountable to peers in a team is significantly different. While some work groups or committees can have team-like qualities, it is usually due to the leader or members working to establish team-based characteristics within the group. The major difference between teams and other types of work groups is that a work group or committee can perform like a team, but a team cannot perform like a work group or committee and still be a team.

As in other organizations using teams, libraries and library workers sometimes struggle with making the transition to teams. Making the successful transition from committees, the most common type of group structure other than departmental work groups in libraries, to teams varies from library to library and with type of library and is dependent on the individuals involved and their receptiveness and willingness to learn new skills.

Quinn (1995) outlined the differences between committees and teams, illustrated in Table 1, in six basic areas—responsibility, authority, management, objectives, process, and information.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Committees</th>
<th>Teams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsibility</strong></td>
<td>—Charged with a special project or task</td>
<td>—Responsible for an entire work process such as acquisitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Members may be selected or may be volunteers</td>
<td>—Members selected based on their role in the work process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Participation levels of members dependent on individual initiative</td>
<td>—Participation levels tend to be higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Involvement of members varies by individual</td>
<td>—All members expected to be involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Authority</strong></td>
<td>—Less authority</td>
<td>—More authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Primarily consultative or advisory</td>
<td>—Teams participate in problem-solving and implementation of decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Usually recommends or advises, but does not make the final decision</td>
<td>—More proactive and less reactive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Management</strong></td>
<td>—More passive and reactive</td>
<td>—Leaders operate as facilitators and may be selected by the team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Leaders usually appointed rather than selected by the group</td>
<td>—Discipline and responsibility internally imposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Discipline and responsibility externally imposed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objectives</strong></td>
<td>—Focus is on a special project or task</td>
<td>—Focus is on specific objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Objectives may be vague</td>
<td>—Team specifies objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Objectives usually determined externally</td>
<td>—Objectives determined and refined by the team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process</strong></td>
<td>—Meets formally but less frequently</td>
<td>—Meets regularly and more frequently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Degree of interdependence is much lower</td>
<td>—Higher level of interdependence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Committees operate in more formal ways</td>
<td>—More task focused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—More process focused; may focus on data-gathering rather than task accomplishment</td>
<td>—Less emphasis on turf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information</strong></td>
<td>—Reliance on management for information</td>
<td>—Power is shared</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—Information is limited and controlled</td>
<td>—Higher levels of motivation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on his analysis of the six areas, Quinn argues that teams “represent a very different model for organizing workers in libraries” and “represents a shift from a managed unit to a unit that is primarily self-managing” (1995, p. 115).

Libraries vary in terms of how much they use teams and for what purposes. In some cases, the library may have only one team working on a functional area such as collection development or instruction or programming. In other cases, teams may exist within departments. Other libraries, like the University of Arizona, have multiple teams and use the team as the fundamental organizing work unit. Developing team skills and supporting teambuilding activities within the library requires support from HR in the area of training and development. Using teams capitalizes on individual knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies while building organizational capacity and flexibility to solve problems in creative and innovative ways.

**Change Management**

For more than a decade, libraries have faced new challenges and dilemmas, opportunities and threats, and rapidly changing environments. The response from academic, public, school, and special libraries has led to substantive changes in how libraries deliver services to users and develop collections, manage operations, approach strategic planning, and view organizational structure and culture.

Like other organizations, libraries have ventured into total quality management or process or continuous improvement. Reengineering, reinvention, systems thinking, and learning organizations have emerged in libraries in recent years, highlighting how many libraries are consciously and deliberately managing change within their organizations and preparing themselves to deal with ongoing change. The University of Arizona’s reorganization began in the early 1990s and continues today, and it serves as the model of a team-based learning organization. Other libraries such as the University of Nebraska–Lincoln have integrated organizational development and HRM by becoming a learning organization with a focus on building the organization’s capacity to change and to manage change successfully. The experiences faced by these libraries reflect the desire of libraries and librarians to remain relevant.

For many libraries, change management initiatives first introduced organizational development concepts into the organization. In most cases, such change increased the demand for HRM activities in the area of training and development as the need for new skills emerged; HR professionals responded by providing such training either directly themselves or by bringing in OD consultants and trainers as needed. The role of the HR professional grew to become more consultative as the demand for managing change effectively across the organization grew.

As a result, HR professionals assisted library administrators and man-
agers in planning and managing such “change initiatives” in parts of the organization or for the overall organization, thus engaging in OD work. “OD is change management. Its goals are to improve: productivity (effectiveness and efficiency); people’s satisfaction with the quality of their work life; the ability of the organization to revitalize and develop itself over time; and organizational processes and outputs,” according to SHRM (2002b, p. 121).

Thus change management initiatives in libraries were linked closely to HR and human resource development (HRD), one of the major functional areas of HRM. Such initiatives ran the gamut from merging or consolidating departments or libraries, modifying services and how they are delivered, or introducing new services as well as making changes in organization structure to create more flexible and responsive organizations and workforces.

For many of these types of initiatives, HRD was and is the logical home for OD given that the primary purpose of HRD efforts—“to ensure that the skills, knowledge, abilities, and performance of the workforce meet current and future organizational and individual needs”—is so closely aligned to the purposes of OD (SHRM, 2002b, p. 1). As a major functional area of HRM, HRD has traditionally had three functions: training and development, organizational development, and career development. Each served a different purpose as defined below.

1. **Training and Development**—Training and development focuses on “providing knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) specific to a particular task or job,” according to SHRM (2002b, p. 11). Training is focused on the short-term and seeks to teach skills that can be applied immediately. Examples of training activities include learning a specific job task or procedures, learning how to operate a piece of equipment, or mastering a piece of software. Developmental activities are broader in focus and are aimed at increasing the long-term capacities of employees to perform their current jobs and future jobs. Examples of developmental activities include formal education, mentoring, and special assignments.

2. **Organizational Development**—“OD is the process of enhancing the effectiveness of an organization and the well-being of its members through planned interventions.” The primary purpose of an OD intervention is to manage change; these can be “changes that improve the effectiveness of the organization or that enhance the relationships of groups or individuals” (SHRM, 2002b, p. 11).

3. **Career Development**—Career development is the “process by which individuals progress through a series of stages in their careers, each of which is characterized by a relatively unique set of issues, themes, tasks” (SHRM, 2002b, p. 12).

Most library HR departments have traditionally focused their HRD efforts on providing training and development. More and more libraries
of all types and many library HR professionals are enhancing the HRD function to include organizational development.

The major reason for this development is simple. Organizations reflect their environment and marketplace. Changes in the larger environment have tremendous impact on organizations. In a 1998 study, Butteriss interviewed a number of executives from a variety of fields to explore the challenges facing organizations. Her interviews identified three key factors causing widespread change for organizations of all types: globalization; increased competition; and changes in the tools of business, particularly information technology, requiring ongoing worker reeducation and flexibility.

In light of these changes, the executives interviewed by Butteriss reflected on the role HR departments and professionals can and should play in helping organizations to meet current and future business needs. From the interviews and research, Butteriss (1998, p. 9) identified seven key ways in which HR can help organizations cope with and manage change in the workplace:

1. Create a common organization-wide vision and value system.
2. Develop a competency-based personnel framework.
3. Provide leadership assessment and development.
4. Move people within the organization for best advantage.
5. Guarantee workplace diversity to ensure success in a global world.
6. Handle the question of change.
7. Reengineer corporate HR functions to a more consultative model by having HR serve as a consultant to management on hiring, training, managing, paying, retaining, and developing the workforce.

The majority of these items reflect the various types of change management initiatives underway in libraries and in organizations today, and each of the seven can be linked to key human resources functions such as strategic planning, employment and staffing, classification and compensation, and training and development.

In view of this research, it seems clear that integrating OD into HRM in libraries is not only possible and desirable but necessary to manage change and improve overall organizational effectiveness.

**Recommendations for Integrating HRM and OD**

In their research, Mendelow and Liebowitz (1989, pp. 323–326) identify ten major difficulties HR professionals encounter in trying to integrate organizational development into HRM and overall organizational strategy. These ten difficulties are:

- lack of commitment from top and line management;
- less than adequate strategic planning;
• failure to view OD as a long-term process;
• top management’s desire for a quick fix;
• difficulty of quantifying OD results;
• failure to link OD to formal reward structures;
• a lack of clarity as to what OD actually is;
• resistance to change;
• lack of credibility of HR professionals; and
• lack of marketing/sales skills of OD professionals.

Overcoming such potential barriers requires that HR professionals seeking to make OD an integral part of the organizational structure begin at the highest levels of the organization in order to be successful in ensuring that the organization sees OD efforts as part of a long-term strategy rather than a quick fix and that integrated HRM/OD functions and initiatives are a vital part of the strategic plan.

Organizational development initiatives need to be seen as valued and integrated into overall HR programs and organizational initiatives. One way to achieve this is to assign responsibility for such functions and initiatives to a HR professional who is a credible, senior-level manager. Public and private corporations have long done this, elevating OD to a vice-presidential level to give it prestige; more and more libraries are elevating this role to the assistant or associate director level.

Investing in training and development for the HR manager and staff—and any line managers—who guide HRM/OD efforts is also critical. Such training and development increases the individual’s and organization’s ability to manage integrated HRM/OD initiatives. Practitioners trained in integrated HRM/OD initiatives will be viewed as more credible and will be better able to clarify the purpose and goals of OD initiatives for all levels of staff, overcome resistance, quantify results of OD initiatives in relation to the organization’s goals and objectives, and link OD to formal reward structures.

Integrating OD concepts into HRM activities can provide libraries with enhanced workforce performance and increased capacity to manage change effectively throughout the organization. The following recommendations are offered to libraries seeking to integrate HRM and OD, as discussed in this article.

Initiate ongoing or periodic job analysis to ensure that changes in jobs are reflected in both job descriptions and in organizational structure. Using job analysis to revise and restructure jobs and to develop job descriptions and job families impacts recruitment and selection; compensation, classification, training and development; performance management; and organizational structure. It also provides the framework for reinforcing organizational values, developing workforce competencies, planning for leadership development, and managing compensation equitably. Libraries can undertake job analysis...
in a number of ways. Internally, jobs can be analyzed by functional area using the expertise of managers and HR professionals within the library. HR professionals working for the parent organization, such as a university, can provide guidance on how to plan an initial job analysis and can assist in developing a plan for ongoing periodic job analysis or, in some cases, can conduct job analysis for the library upon request.

Undertake work redesign on a selective basis as needed within the organization. Libraries continue to face dramatic changes due to a wide variety of factors. Library functions such as cataloging or acquisitions can be systematically reviewed, and work processes, workflows, and jobs within those functions should be redesigned to reflect necessary changes to increase effectiveness and efficiency. Library services such as reference, instruction, or collection development also lend themselves to systematic periodic review and should be redesigned as necessary to meet changing customer needs. Work redesign processes impact organizational structure, employment and staffing, compensation, training and development, and performance management. Coupled with job analysis, work redesign can provide the organization with opportunities to develop staff in creative ways and to move people to parts of the organization that best suit their knowledge, skills, abilities, talents, and competencies and best meet the needs of the organization.

Experiment with teams and seek to develop team skills across the organization. Libraries are labor-intensive organizations. Current budget trends are likely to result in smaller workforces, and this trend is unlikely to change in coming years. The ability of a library organization to staff itself in flexible ways will directly impact its ability to respond to a changing environment and meet customer needs. Developing team skills in all levels of the organization can enhance the organization’s ability to solve problems, generate solutions, and manage resources effectively and efficiently. Using teams can enhance organizational flexibility in staffing and ensure that work is distributed more equitably. Using teams for specific projects or across the entire organization can also enhance diversity initiatives. Even if the library organization has no immediate plans to use teams, developing and enhancing team-building skills at all levels across the organization can be built into the training and development curriculum and offerings so that employees are given the opportunity to learn these skills to enhance individual and organizational effectiveness. The end result is likely to be improved collaboration and cooperation.

Seek to manage change proactively. All libraries will need to manage change effectively to survive and thrive in today’s environment. Whether the change initiative affects only a part of the organization or the entire organization, the process of managing change needs to be done as consciously and deliberately as librarians manage services, operations, facilities, personnel, and budget.
Incorporating organizational development strategies into overall human resources programs “creates a win-win environment in which managers and employees increasingly trust each other, receive more information, and participate in problem solving and decision making” (Liebowitz and Mendelow, 1988, p. 116).

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Learning to Lead: An Analysis of Current Training Programs for Library Leadership

Florence M. Mason and Louella V. Wetherbee

Abstract
Leadership concepts and theories began appearing in the library literature in the late 1980s. By the 1990s a number of leadership development programs were being offered that were designed to develop librarian leadership skills. The programs had various objectives: to improve career development of early and midcareer librarians; to provide access to underrepresented minority groups in management; and to develop leadership skills. These programs, primarily multiday and residential in nature, employed a hybrid mix of training methods, including focus on leadership styles, self-discovery, and emphasis on skill-building. Despite the proliferation of these programs, evaluation research about them has primarily focused on self-reports from participants about their learning and their satisfaction with these programs. Systematic evaluation research, particularly utilizing a control group design or providing a longitudinal assessment, has not been widely conducted in the field.

Section One: Leadership Theories and Leadership Training: An Overview
One of the leading management texts defines leadership as “The ability to influence, motivate, and direct others in order to attain desired objectives” (Hellriegel & Slocum, 1992, p. 467). Defining leadership seems straightforward, but explaining how leaders lead and, more importantly, what skills they use to lead, is a much more complicated and complex issue. Presumably, the designers of leadership development training programs...
have an underlying concept or set of concepts explaining what leadership means and how leaders can be developed. Below we outline some core assumptions behind various leadership development programs.

The first fundamental assumption is that leaders can be developed. Long a fiercely debated topic, it is now accepted as true. Modern leadership training is firmly based on the belief that individuals can be educated, trained, and developed to be leaders. A second assumption important to the discussion of leadership training is the belief that management differs from leadership and that managers can be transformed into leaders through training and development.

The exact nature of leadership skills remains elusive; the skill set of leaders is the focus of considerable discussion and research in the management literature as well as the library literature. “There is no simple formula, no rigorous science, no cookbook that leads inexorably to successful leadership” (Bennis & Nanus, 1985, p. 223). Leadership research has been built upon different theories of how leaders lead. Trait research focuses on the traits or personal qualities of leaders and stresses that successful leaders have certain abilities, skills, and personality characteristics. Leadership research does agree that certain personal traits and characteristics are especially important for leaders and for the exercise of leadership. For example, leadership researchers Kouzes and Posner identified 225 different values, traits, and characteristics as important for leaders. They subsequently identified 15 key traits out of this larger list. The most important leadership skills are for leaders to be honest, forward-looking, inspiring, and competent (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 25). Taken together, these skills constitute leader “credibility,” which is the key factor that elevates leaders above other competent individuals (Kouzes & Posner, 1993). Extensive research conducted by Kouzes and Posner over a two-decade period has attempted to assess what characteristics leaders should possess. Table 1 presents a summary of the most important leadership characteristics and the percentage of respondents selecting each leadership characteristic. Kouzes and Posner repeated their research three times. The data shows that followers consistently picked four characteristics: leaders should be honest, forward-looking, competent, and inspiring. These are the top four leadership characteristics followers expect in their leaders.

Some theories of leadership have been based on the assumption that certain physical, social, and personal characteristics are inherent in leaders. Trait research generally also leads to the conclusion that leaders with certain traits will exhibit certain kinds of behavior and that behaviors are likely to be consistent. On the other hand, research based on behavioral theories of leadership began to focus on the differences in the actions of effective and ineffective leaders, particularly behaviors that affect the performance of subordinates. During the 1970s and into the 1980s leadership began to be viewed as a two-part role. The term leader had been applied
Table 1. Characteristics of Admired Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>2002 Respondents (%)</th>
<th>1995 Respondents (%)</th>
<th>1987 Respondents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Honest</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forward-looking</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competent</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspiring</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligent</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair-minded</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad-minded</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Straightforward</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependable</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determined</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imaginative</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambitious</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courageous</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mature</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyal</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-controlled</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Results of questionnaires administered by the authors three times. Respondents were asked to identify characteristics of a good leader. Survey size is approximately 75,000 persons on six continents. Adapted from The Leadership Challenge (3rd ed.), (p. 25), by J. M. Kouzes & B. Z. Posner, 2002, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

loosely to anyone who was managing others—a social role. There also exists a distinct and separate role that describes how a leader might define and structure tasks and the roles of subordinates (Conger, 1992, p. 10). Behavioral theories also began to assume that leaders can act differently as circumstances warrant. The contingency view of leadership, as espoused by Fiedler, House, and others, emphasizes the importance of using certain leadership behaviors in different situations (Fiedler, 1971; House & Mitchell, 1974). Variables such as group atmosphere, task structure, and the leader’s positional power are all important to this view. The Ohio State Leadership studies found that an effective leader used a behavioral style identified as “considerate” with followers. “Consideration” is defined as the extent to which leaders have job relationships characterized by trust, two-way communication, respect for the ideas of others, and consideration for the feelings and personal goals of others. A second important characteristic of successful leaders is “initiating structure.” Initiating structure is the extent to which leaders define and structure their roles and the roles of others through activities such as planning, communicating, scheduling, and so forth. Taken together, consideration and initiating structure
are the two characteristics of effective leaders based on this model (Kerr, Schriesheim, Murphy, & Stogdill, 1974).

James MacGregor Burns (Burns, 1978) extends the Ohio State Leadership model and defines leadership as transformational (a focus on change) and transactional (a focus on process and people). Leadership involves engaging not only the heads but also the hearts of others. Transformational leaders lead by motivating others and by appealing to higher ideals and moral values. These leaders can inspire others to think about problems in a new way. Key transformational skills for leaders are long-term vision, empowerment, and coaching. Transformational leaders are able to create trust: “To create trust [leaders] must have competence, congruity (integrity), constancy, and caring” (Bennis & Goldsmith, 1994, pp. 5–6).

Transactional leadership focuses on the initiating structure—the relationship between the leader and his or her followers. Leaders understand how to motivate followers by inspiring a vision of what is to be accomplished. Leaders seem to be able to pull people toward a large vision and have the capacity to create a compelling vision that encourages people to move to a new place. Transactional skills involve the ability to obtain results, solve problems, plan, and organize. Leaders must also be effective communicators. None of the other characteristics, or a combination of these, will be enough if a leader lacks excellent communication ability. As leadership theory evolved, organizational development experts began to view leadership development as a process; leadership trainers began to focus on teaching leadership skills that emphasized visioning as well as developing relationships and people-oriented skills to inspire others.

In any case, there is an emerging agreement on a number of common attributes shared by leaders. Leaders are more than managers. Leadership and management are typically contrasted with one another. Management is about what things get done, while leadership is about how things get done. Management involves accomplishing tasks, while leadership involves influencing and guiding a course of action. Management is usually understood as a skill set that includes planning, organizing, directing, and managing workers and work activities. Leadership, on the other hand, includes the ability to create a vision of the future, engage others in the cocreation and/or perfection of that vision, describe it in a compelling and powerful manner, and create an environment where stakeholders inside and outside the organization work together productively and effectively to implement the vision successfully. Table 2 summarizes how management and leadership differ.

**Section Two: Librarians, Leadership, and Leadership Skills**

Leadership as a desired skill or competency did not appear frequently in the library literature until the early 1990s. Don Riggs, in conducting
his research for a book on library leadership, found only five entries for librarianship and leaders in *Library Literature* for the years 1975–1981 (Riggs, 1982, preface). Karp and Murdock (1998) point out that the word “leadership” is not used by *Library Literature* as a subject heading and conclude that “Leadership as a concept . . . seems not to be concretely acknowledged as a legitimate entity that merits clearly identified discussion and definition” (Karp & Murdock, 1998, p. 251).

Many states developing continuing education plans in the 1980s and 1990s did not yet identify leadership skills as a key training issue. For example, the California Continuing Education Plan (O’Donnell & Virgo, 1992) defined continuing education needs in five areas: financial management, management administration, communications/personnel relations, multicultural diversity, and technology.

In this plan leadership skills are defined as a subset of training in communications and personnel relations. One evaluator commented that classifying leadership in this manner “may reflect the fact that in the early 1990’s economic and demographic factors were considerably different than they are today. . . . Under current conditions, leadership training assumes an importance that was lacking a decade ago” (Hinman & Williams, 2002, p. 54).

By the 1990s and beyond, the need for leadership had been well established in the profession. Recruitment became a major issue for the profession as the demographics of librarianship changed. How to fill librarian positions in coming years is an important issue for the field at large. Currently, approximately 136,000 librarians are employed in U.S. academic, public, school, and special libraries. Estimates from the U.S. Bureau of Statistics about library manpower and statistics from the Association for Research Libraries’ (ARL) 1990 and 1994 salary surveys (Wilder, 1995, 2002) indicate there is likely to be a serious shortage of librarians by the year 2010, when an estimated 83,866 librarians will reach the age of 65. The

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**Table 2. Leadership versus Management**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A leader does the right things.</td>
<td>A good manager does things right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership is about effectiveness.</td>
<td>Management is largely about efficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leading is about what and why.</td>
<td>Management is about how to do things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership is about trust and about people.</td>
<td>Management is about systems, controls,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership is about innovating and initiating.</td>
<td>procedures, policies, and structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership looks at the horizon, not just the</td>
<td>Management is about copying, about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bottom line.</td>
<td>managing the status quo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management is about the bottom line.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Adapted from *Learning to lead: A workbook on becoming a leader* (p. 4), by W. Bennis & J. Goldsmith, 1994, Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
Library Administration and Management Association (LAMA), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), estimates that one-half of the currently employed library directors in the United States will retire between 2002 and 2010 (Olley, 2002, p. 9).

Diversification of the profession has also been identified as a leadership issue. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s the Council on Library Resources and other professional associations identified a need to increase diversity in the field of librarianship. A number of leadership programs were started both to recruit more minorities into the profession and to develop their leadership skills. ARL currently offers a program for minority midcareer librarians in academic librarianship. The Leadership and Career Development Program has as its purpose increasing the diversity of ARL directors. The (ALA’s) Spectrum program and scholarship are also a notable effort to enhance career opportunities for minority leaders.¹

At the same time, library professionals are becoming aware of the need for leadership skills. For instance, a 2001 survey of continuing education needs for staff in California libraries completed by the Evaluation and Training Institute (ETI) for the California State Library found that more than 40 percent of the respondents had taken leadership and career training in the areas of improving their written and verbal communication skills, conflict resolution, supervision, and stress management; participants also wanted additional leadership training in the areas of creativity, innovation, cultural competency, supervision, and stress management (ETI, 2001).

Leadership training has perhaps also been stymied by a lack of agreement about what constitutes a key set of leadership skills for librarians. Library leadership has typically been described more in terms of stories about individuals. There are few lists of desired characteristics, and there is as yet no accepted core set of competencies, experiences, or aptitudes (Mech, 1996; Hernon, Powell, & Young, 2001; Sweeney, 1994; Berry, 2002). Lynch, in an article on theory and practice in library management and leadership, concludes that the library literature reflects many of the leadership approaches described in general management literature, but she also notes that the contingency and situational models, along with team-based leadership, are the most common orientation for library leadership training (Lynch, 2004).

There is no common vocabulary among library educators or professionals about what constitutes the core body of leadership skills. Added to this issue is the complex problem of defining skills appropriate to librarians working in different types of libraries and librarians in different stages of their careers. Continuing education studies consistently show that librarians can identify a wide variety of training needs as “leadership” related. The question of the legitimacy of leadership in librarianship has changed, however, and insights into what constitutes library leadership can be garnered from a number of sources, although no unifying statement of key
leadership skills has yet been produced by a body such as the American Library Association or other professional groups.

In defining “leadership” the articles on leadership discuss applied skills and demonstrate a considerable diversity of opinion about the nature of the key skills. Articles and research on librarians and libraries were examined, as were competency statements prepared by professional associations that discuss leadership. Articles describing the need for library leadership suggest that leaders should be flexible, energetic, empathetic, wise, creative, courageous, principled, gregarious, determined, and possess a sense of humor (Sweeney, 1994). A review of the writing about library leadership describes the essential leadership skills for librarians as the need to be assertive and self-aware (Cottam, 1990), to communicate a vision (Riggs, 1993), to empower others (Sullivan, 1999; Sheldon, 1991), to be innovative and creative (Sheldon, 1991), to be technically and professionally competent (Sheldon, 1991), to have the trust of the staff (Sheldon, 1991), and to value people (Creth, 1988). Hernon’s study of ARL directors identified more than 100 skills, traits and areas of knowledge that are considered desirable attributes for an ARL library director/leader (Hernon, Powell, & Young, 2001).

Progress has been made to define core competencies for librarians in a number of areas (Abels, Jones, Latham, Magnoni, & Marshall, 2003; Jones, 1998), although competencies related to library professionals in specific settings have not been defined or discussed broadly. Competencies are defined as “the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, behaviors or characteristics that people need to do a job successfully” (Bryant & Poustie, 2001). Another definition of competencies defines them as “observable behaviors that reflect knowledge, skills and attitudes learned by individual staff” (Mason, Creth, & Wetherbee, 2001, p. II 3). Competencies increasingly are being defined as a means to correlate desired behaviors with job performance. Competencies can be improved with training, and they are being used to help establish the need for training and development and to specify what performance the training should produce. Competency statements defining key leadership attributes have been developed by a number of different library associations and organizations. The California Library Association (CLA) Statement of Professional Competencies for librarians describes a leadership competency whereby a leader “set[s] an example for others to follow . . . values the contributions of others . . . and helps them to achieve their full potential” (CLA, 1997). The New Jersey Library Association (NJLA) adopted a leadership competency that defines a leader as one who sees the long view, articulates the direction clearly and enlists others to jointly work to achieve it. The NJLA statement also includes the same phrases found in the CLA leadership competency description quoted above.

The Special Library Association (SLA) has adopted a leadership competency statement that simply says that a special librarian “provides leader-
ship” (SLA, 1997). The Queens (NY) Public Library statement defines the leadership of team leaders, which involves management meetings, keeping people informed, promoting team effectiveness, acting as a leader, and communicating a competing vision (Queens Public Library, n.d.). The San Jose Public Library competency statements define leadership as “setting a worthy example for others to follow; valuing the contributions of others and helping them achieve their full potential, and developing, coaching and mentoring staff effectively” (Mason, Greth & Wetherbee, 2001, p. II 3). The Toronto Public Library proposes that the list of competencies of successful leaders should include innovative thinking, strategic vision, excitement, and effective communication. Successful library leaders should have the tactical capability to be action oriented, pragmatic and hands-on; they should fully delegate tasks to empower people, use consultative decision-making to involve others, and be empathetic to demonstrate sensitivity to individual and group needs (Bryant & Poustie, 2001).

A review article of competency statements in the Annual Review of Information Science and Technology found that many such competency studies produced lists of similar competencies, including interpersonal skills, management of technology, knowledge of information sources, and communication skills (Logan & Hsieh-Yee, 2001, p. 440). In preparing the review for this publication, we found that leadership is sometimes included as a specific competency for librarians. In other situations leadership can be described as a set of certain characteristics, such as honesty, integrity, ethics, and so forth. Certain skills such as communications skills are almost always included as key competencies in many of the statements.

One of the few published reports of efforts to link needed leadership skills and training outcomes was the Career Development and Assessment Center for Librarians, which was developed to assess specific leadership skills among librarians in the Northwest. The article describes the center as “the first experimental application of assessment technology to individual professional career development . . . in librarianship” (Hiatt, 1992, p. 513). The Career Development and Assessment Center for Librarians operated between 1979 and 1983 in the Northwest. An assessment center defines a process of using multiple assessment techniques (situational exercises, job simulations, etc.) to evaluate individual library workers. The CDACL was able to identify fourteen key management skills in two categories, management and communication, critical for librarians. The skills included listening, oral communication, sensitivity, writing ability, and management skills, including decisiveness, delegation, flexibility, initiative, decision-making, leadership, management control, planning, organizing, problem analysis, and stress tolerance. Eighty-nine librarians were evaluated through the assessment center process. The three strongest managerial skills for this group were decisiveness, listening, and initiative, while the three weakest skills for the group overall were judgment, management control, and flexibility.
Largely as a result of these findings, the University of Washington Graduate School of Library and Information Science later conducted training for librarians that focused on these skill weaknesses. The Seattle Public Library later used these study results to develop assessment technique training for supervisors (Hiatt, 1992).

**SECTION THREE: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TRAINING: LEARNING TO BE A LEADER**

Individuals do not develop and hone their leadership skills just in the classroom. In fact, significant leadership development takes place in the workplace and elsewhere. The most important nontraining influences on leadership development are a result of job assignments, adversity or hardships, and personal contacts (McCall, Lombardim, & Morrison, 1988). McCall’s research found that, for a majority of leaders, job assignments were a major influence on leadership development, as leaders coped with job variety and with new tasks and unfamiliar situations. Jobs also required managers to build or change relationships and led to learning, as did jobs with high levels of risk or responsibility, for example, jobs with consequences (McCauley & Brutus, 1998).

Hardship experiences found to be influential on leadership development include being fired or demoted, making business mistakes, experiencing personal trauma, or being responsible for downsizing. The third, but less significant, influence on leadership development is in the area of personal relationships. In less than 10 percent of the cases, the leaders felt that relationships with bosses or role models at work had influenced their leadership development (McCauley, 2001, p. 352).

The influence of different organizational contexts on leadership has also been proven. The organizational context can influence leadership development in a number of important ways, including the linkage of leadership development to compensation plans and rewards and the extent to which the organization supports leadership development (McCauley, 2001, p. 347).

Leadership skills are also developed through training programs. The ability to learn is important in leadership training. At the most basic level, the ability to learn leadership skills is a complex mix of motivation, personal orientation, and skills. Below we give an overview of leadership development approaches, which are discussed in terms of the delivery format of the training, the types of leadership training approach used, and the exercises typically associated with each type of approach.

*Leadership Training Development Models*

The variety of learning approaches in leadership development is vast. This section briefly outlines some of these approaches based on the work of Conger (1992; Conger & Benjamin, 1999). Leadership development
training can be described and grouped according to the type of training model used and the type of leadership development exercises employed in a program. Conger has grouped leadership training approaches used in corporate leadership development into four types: skill-building programs (executive training programs offered by various universities are an example); intensive feedback programs (for example, the Leadership Development Program, Center for Creative Leadership, Greensboro, North Carolina); conceptual approaches (for example, The Leadership Challenge); and personal growth approaches (Outward Bound and other physical challenge programs). Detailed descriptions of different learning development programs and the learning approaches used in these programs can be found in Conger (1992) and Conger and Benjamin (1999).

**Overview and Description of Library Leadership Development Training**

The current plethora of leadership articles and programs in librarianship, as identified in this article, seem to indicate that, although leadership training and development programs were largely unknown in the 1980s, this has now changed. Leadership programs are defined here according to criteria established by the Association for Research Libraries Office of Leadership and Management Services (ARL/OLMS). Programs are held regularly that have as their focus “leadership development, not technical skills or policy analysis” (Neely & Winston, 1999). The first formal leadership development for librarians appears to be the Senior Fellows Program developed in 1982 and still held at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Another early program that focused on staff development at the University of Missouri-Columbia was funded by the Council on Library Resources in 1984, but only six programs were identified that have existed since the first half of the 1990s. Since 1996, however, the emphasis on leadership in librarianship has increased and more leadership programs have been developed: twenty-one library leadership programs appear to have been founded between 1996 and 2002.

The ARL deserves special mention as a long-time leader in offering a menu of leadership and management programs. ARL, through its Office of Leadership and Management Services, has been providing leadership activities for academic libraries for more than twenty-five years and has the longest and most consistent record of promoting leadership training and skills-building training programs in the profession. Thousands of librarians, primarily from academic institutions, have benefited from one or more of the OLMS programs, services, publications, consultations, or training workshops offered over the years. Table 3 summarizes the different types of leadership development programs that were identified for this review. A brief description of each program is given, and some information is provided about the type of program and the learning objectives. Many of these programs are not pure types, and many employ a number of differ-
Table 3. Library Leadership Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Program</th>
<th>First Offered</th>
<th>Continues (Y/N)</th>
<th>Number of Days</th>
<th>Program Mode</th>
<th>Target Audience</th>
<th>Selective Admission</th>
<th>Primary Emphasis</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Moderators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Library Association Spectrum</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td></td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Minority librarians</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Improve local-level library service; minority recruitment.</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACRL/Harvard Leadership Institute</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Academic library directors and associate directors</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Leadership, organizational. Strategy, transformational leadership, planning</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Harvard faculty, M. Sullivan, and others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association of Research Libraries Leadership and Career Development</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5 + off-site</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Early and midcareer minority librarians in academic libraries</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Encourage diversity in top leadership of academic libraries.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Varies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aurora Leadership Institute, Australia</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Librarians in Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Emphasis on developing leadership skills, change, creativity, etc.</td>
<td>30–35</td>
<td>Schreiver &amp; Shannon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bertlsmann Foundation International Network of Public Libraries</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>Librarians in major Public libraries, international</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Leadership skills</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDUCAUSE Leadership Institute</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4–5</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Information technology managers in higher education</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Develop management skills focusing on motivation and deployment of staff</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Program</td>
<td>First Offered</td>
<td>Continues (Y/N)</td>
<td>Number of Days</td>
<td>Program Mode</td>
<td>Target Audience</td>
<td>Selective Admission</td>
<td>Primary Emphasis</td>
<td>Number of Participants</td>
<td>Moderators</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frye Leadership Institute</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>14 +</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Higher education faculty, librarians, information technology professionals</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Leadership skills for higher education leaders</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Administration and Management Association, ALA Leadership Survival Kit</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>Librarians with 2 years experience</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Leadership concepts and theories; personal assessment; leadership skills</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Abigail Hubbard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library of Congress Leadership</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>Library of Congress librarians</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Focus on developing leadership skills</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Leadership Institute (Monroe County Library System)</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Librarians and support staff</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Personal assessment; leadership skills development</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Wetherbee &amp; Mason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Leadership Ohio</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Ohio librarians with 2–10 years experience</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Train leadership skills for tomorrow’s library leaders</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Schreiber &amp; Shannon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan Leadership Academy</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Michigan librarians with master of library science degrees</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Leadership theories and behavior, change, risk, power, diversity, collaboration</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>M. Sullivan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Program</td>
<td>First Offered</td>
<td>Continues (Y/N)</td>
<td>Program Mode</td>
<td>Target Audience</td>
<td>Selective Admission</td>
<td>Primary Emphasis</td>
<td>Number of Participants</td>
<td>Moderators</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Plains Library Association Leadership</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Master of library science librarians with 10 years experience</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Leadership theories and behavior, change, risk, power, diversity, collaboration</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>M. Sullivan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortenson Center for International Library Programs</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Librarians from international libraries</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Leadership in international libraries</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Library of Medicine AAHSL Leadership Fellows Program</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Midcareer librarians with 5 years as department head or higher responsibility in academic health sciences libraries</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Introduce leadership theory and practical tools for implementing change; develop networks between fellows and mentors</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska Library Institute</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Nebraska librarians</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Self-awareness, leadership styles, change, planning, funding, conflict resolution</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Schreiber &amp; Shannon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada Leadership Institute</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Nevada librarians</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Personal assessment, leadership skills development</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Wetherbee &amp; Mason</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey Library Association Academy</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>New Jersey librarians with 5–12 years experience</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Leadership theories, self-awareness, leadership styles, change, planning, funding, conflict resolution</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>M. Sullivan, Schreiber &amp; Shannon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Program</td>
<td>First Offered</td>
<td>Continues (Y/N)</td>
<td>Number of Days</td>
<td>Program Mode</td>
<td>Target Audience</td>
<td>Selective Admission</td>
<td>Primary Emphasis</td>
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<td>Moderators</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library Leadership New Mexico</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>New Mexico librarians</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Self-awareness, leadership styles, change, planning, funding, conflict resolution</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Schreiber &amp; Shannon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina LA Leadership</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>North Carolina professionals, para-professionals, and graduate students</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Develop and enhance leadership skills, building self-concept; create a vision, empower others, diversity</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>North Carolina faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Exposure</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Professionals plus 7 years experience</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Assist professional librarians to strengthen their leadership skills; focus on understanding leadership types, use of Myers-Briggs, ethics, advocacy, change and vision</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>University of Alberta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowbird Institute</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Early career librarians nationally with less than 5 years experience</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Leadership styles, role of vision, creativity, risk-taking.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Schreiber &amp; Shannon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanford-California Institute</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Mostly California librarians—the next generation of library leaders—most mid-career</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Focus on topics including technology, library collections, organizational effectiveness, facilities planning, technology impacts</td>
<td>125–145</td>
<td>Various with Stanford faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Program</td>
<td>First Offered</td>
<td>Continues (Y/N)</td>
<td>Number of Days</td>
<td>Program Mode</td>
<td>Target Audience</td>
<td>Selective Admission</td>
<td>Primary Emphasis</td>
<td>Number of Participants</td>
<td>Moderators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas Library Association TALL Texans</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Midcareer librarians, TLA members</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Foster leadership capabilities, define leadership development for TLA members; leadership style, politics, change and foster cultural diversity in library leadership</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Sullivan &amp; Siggins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCLA Senior Fellows Program</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>ARL directors or associate directors</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Enhance leadership in North American libraries, particularly research libraries</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Michigan Public Library Leadership</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Library directors</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Change and adapting to change, future issues, facilities planning, new technologies</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Varies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Minnesota Training Institute for Librarians of Color</td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Minority librarians, early career with 1–3 years experience</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Effective communication, teamwork, decision-making, conflict management</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ULC—Executive Leadership Institute</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>4 +</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>New and midcareer librarians</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Action learning with applying leadership skills in real situations over a sustained period. Adaptive creativity, personal leadership development</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Varies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Program</td>
<td>First Offered</td>
<td>Continues (Y/N)</td>
<td>Number of Days</td>
<td>Program Mode</td>
<td>Target Audience</td>
<td>Selective Admission</td>
<td>Primary Emphasis</td>
<td>Number of Participants</td>
<td>Moderators</td>
</tr>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Library Association Programs</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Promote leadership skills for paraprofessionals</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming Library Association Leadership</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>Wyoming librarians</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Leadership traits and skills development, conflict resolution, communication skills, teamwork</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>National Outdoor Leadership School ENCK Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YS Lead MA</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>School and public librarians working in youth services</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Leadership theories and behavior, change, risk, power, diversity, collaboration</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>M. Sullivan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The material reported here was gathered from a database search that identified leadership-related training programs for librarians and those working in or for libraries. Print and Web-based journal articles, promotional pieces, and reviews by participants were used to construct the table data.
ent types of leadership developmental approaches. Mentors are used in many programs; some programs have follow-up exercises and activities, and others include “leadership projects” that are to be completed by the participants.

In 2003 more than thirty library leadership programs were held annually or biannually. Mirroring the leadership development literature that has developed, however, most of the training is descriptive, and there continues to be very little published research on the impacts and outcomes of these programs in the management literature and almost none at all about library leadership development training in the library literature.

A management researcher noted that “Knowledge about developmental experiences in managerial careers has relied heavily on retrospective reports of executives and case studies of developmental interventions in specific companies. . . . There is a need for more . . . examination of the impact of these [experiences]” (McCauley, 2001, p. 378). This statement holds true for library leadership development training as well.

Of the programs identified, the majority are located in the United States, but one exists in Australia and another in Canada. International programs are also offered by the Bertlesman Foundation and the Mortenson Center at the University of Illinois, Urbana–Champaign, which are ongoing programs over a period of months. A number of the programs are focused on statewide library development, including programs in Illinois, Michigan, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, and Wyoming. The programs in Michigan and Texas (started in 1990 and 1994, respectively) appear to be the oldest continuing leadership programs.

Criteria for defining types of leadership development programs include (1) the type of program (residential, etc.); (2) the intended audience, for example, the inclusion or exclusion of certain individuals; (3) the objectives of the program, such as the types of behaviors and skill sets that are identified or are to be developed during the training, and the intent of the program; (4) the size of the trainee group; and (5) the trainers or faculty used in the program. Most of the library programs fall into the category of a residential program or workshop format. A majority of the programs appear to be set up as residential programs that last either multiple days or a week. Selected participants spend multiple days in a retreat or resort setting.

Leadership development programs appear to be selective in terms of participants. Participants in these programs may be selected from a national pool of candidates and are likely to have been selected through a competitive application process. Participants may have to meet certain criteria, such as being at the associate director level at an academic library, holding a library degree from an ALA-accredited master’s program, or having five years of administrative or managerial experience. Participants
are expected to spend classroom and social time together. The time spent in the program is considered part of the learning experience.

The content of these programs is likely to emphasize personal growth and development along with leadership skills development. These programs are usually intended to allow participants to bond into a cohort or group, and many of the exercises are intended to encourage building long-term relationships. Mentors are included in many of these programs and provide instruction and coaching for individual participants.

**Leadership-focused programs** are typically a series of sessions that meet over time from one to several days. These programs may be structured so that participants attend one or two days of training distributed over a period of time at a central site. Participants attend programs during the day but do not spend free time together or stay overnight. Socializing or socialization with this type of program is limited by the format. Examples of internal programs of this type include the Library of Congress Leadership Development Program begun in 1995 and the Harris County (Texas) Leadership Development program. These programs could be formal degree programs, offer continuing education credit, or operate at the local level only. They may be specific to an institution or offered by a regional cooperative organization for its membership. Classes are likely to be the same size as in a residential program, but the application process is less likely to be competitive. Participants may be expected to have a number of years of work experience and a number of years of supervisory or management experience as criteria for admission. On the other hand, these programs may be geared to early or midcareer professionals or minorities. Interaction is generally restricted to the class session periods, and there is less likely to be social time or follow-up activities associated with these programs. Program content can vary and may include focus on personal development as well as building specific leadership skills; mentoring may be part of the program. Organizations may offer internal leadership workshops for their staff based on this type of model. Harris County Public Library is an example of this type of program, as is that in San Jose, California.

**Workshops** offer training usually in one- or two-day formats with no overnight activities. Applicants typically “sign up” to attend, and their entrance requirements may be limited to attendance quotas. Continuing education credit might be available for completing these programs. Workshops are likely to be offered on a one-time basis and focus on developing one or more leadership skills. Mentoring is less likely to be offered in this type of training format.

**Description of Learning Approaches**

According to published descriptions, many programs use hybrid approaches to leadership development, including feedback methods, conceptual approaches, and skill-building exercises (see Table 4).
Feedback intensive approaches may include multisource, 360 feedback or assessment center approaches or psychological inventories. The Nevada Leadership Institute and the Monroe County Library Leadership Institute used a 360 assessment instrument, the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), based on the work of Kouzes and Posner (2002). Feedback instruments involve having the participants rated by superiors, peers, and subordinates on a number of competencies. Research on 360 feedback approaches has shown that use of these tools does lead to increased job performance (Atwater, Roush, & Fichthal 1995). These programs also increase participant self-awareness, broaden and change perspectives, and lead to successful goal attainment (McCauley, 2001, p. 374).

Conceptual leadership approaches involve theories; the focus of this approach is on giving managers an understanding of what leadership attributes and behaviors are desirable and what it takes to be an effective leader (McCauley, 2001, p. 359). Lectures, case studies, and discussions are typical tools, but these types of programs may also incorporate experiential

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Approaches</th>
<th>Learning Assumptions</th>
<th>Learning Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual awareness</td>
<td>Adults learn through use of mental models and conceptual frameworks that are often built around contrasts.</td>
<td>Written and video case studies, lectures on conceptual models, discussion groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>Personal feedback allows learners to identify their strengths and weaknesses along with a set of competencies. The feedback positively reinforces strengths and encourages learners to address weaknesses or find a means to compensate for them.</td>
<td>Observational exercise; survey and verbal feedback from training observers, fellow participants, and workplace colleagues (360 exercises).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill-building</td>
<td>Learners can develop leadership competencies from behavioral modeling. Participants use structured exercises to practice skills and then receive feedback on their implementation.</td>
<td>Practice exercises for skills. Simulation and lectures may be used. Trainers may model behaviors, and video case studies might be used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal growth</td>
<td>Emotional and physical challenges force reflective learning about individual behavior, work views, and personal aspirations.</td>
<td>Outdoor adventures or indoor psychological exercises with emphasis on risk-taking, teamwork, and personal values exploration.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Adapted from Building leaders: How successful companies develop the next generation (pp. 44–45), by J. A. Conger & B. Benjamin, 1999, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
exercises and feedback instruments. Descriptions of library leadership curricula indicate that conceptual approaches are incorporated into almost all library leadership development programs to some extent. For example, the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Harvard Leadership program includes presentations, discussions, case studies, group sessions, social time, assigned readings, and interaction with mentors. The UCLA Senior Fellow Program includes a program of readings, presentations, site visits, group discussions, reflection, and self-exploration. The Snowbird program includes self-exploration and discovery through learning activities, group discussions, and interaction with mentors.

Skill-building programs may utilize practical exercises in modules. “Within a module, participants are given information and strategies for executing the skill, observe the skill in action, and practice the skill themselves” (McCauley, 2001, p. 360). Techniques might include role-playing with videotape feedback, group exercises, and simulations.

Leadership programs also used profile instruments such as Myers-Briggs, which has been utilized by the Northern Exposure Leadership Institute, or the Enneagram assessment tools. These tools can provide helpful insights into a leader’s personality characteristics and preferences.

Mentoring and coaching are also effective development tools; they serve as a means of matching people for the purpose of learning and personal and professional growth. These activities can also integrate new individuals into the profession and strengthen leadership skills among women and minorities.

A number of the library leadership development programs include mentors in the program design, particularly those developed by ARL. The UCLA Senior Fellow program incorporates this type of approach as do the Northern Exposure to Leadership Institute held in Canada, the Aurora Leadership Institute held in Australia, the TALL Texans program, and the Snowbird Institute.

Personal growth programs help participants to develop self-understanding through an exploration of their personal values and interests. The most common forms are outdoor adventure programs and approaches that use psychological exercises to help participants explore their inner drives and values. The Outward Bound model of a physical challenge course is used infrequently, if at all, for training librarians. The Wyoming leadership program is one that may incorporate some elements of physical challenge. A more limited type of personal growth program involves exercises and self-assessment. For example, in the ACRL Harvard program, participants are asked to create a personal “Leadership Autobiography” (Saunders, 1999), while participants in the TALL Texans program prepare a Personal Action Agenda.

A number of programs also foster networking with other colleagues and extending personal development through activities beyond the class-
room. For instance, the TALL Texans and UCLA Fellows programs and other programs include follow-up activities. The Snowbird Institute offers activities such as a listserv, informal reunions at annual library conferences, interaction with other Snowbird attendees, and mentoring relationships after the completion of the program.

The number of participants is limited for many of the programs, with a typical limit of about 20 to 40 attendees. The Stanford-California Institute was unusually large, with approximately 145 participants at the 2002 session.

Financing for programs has varied. Typically participants pay some form of tuition. Many of the programs are not self-financing, and the programs have relied on corporate sponsorship (SIRSI, epixtech), or use of federal Library Services and Technology (LSTA) funding. Other underwriters include state or regional cooperatives, universities, and associations.

Library leadership program faculty members are drawn from a number of sources. Consultants with library experience and professional degrees conduct many of the state-based programs, including programs in New Mexico, Ohio, Michigan, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, and Texas. The Aurora, Snowbird, and YSLead seminars are also conducted by consultants. Academic faculty, often in combination with consultants and perhaps practitioners, conduct a number of programs. The ACRL Harvard Leadership program involves Harvard faculty, while the North Carolina leadership program involves library school faculty. Northern Exposure and the Stanford-California Institute also use academic faculty in their programs.

SECTION FOUR: RESULTS FROM LIBRARY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

How effective has leadership training been for librarians? What has it accomplished? Are there any generalized findings about leadership development training? Can the impacts and outcomes of training be stated based on the results of the evaluations that have been performed? Only a few published sources were identified that discussed formal evaluation results from leadership training programs. The bulk of the published materials reporting on library leadership training fall into the category of participant self-reporting or descriptive narratives of program components. Much of the published literature contains statements excerpted from participant comments and personal recounting of the leadership experience (Nichols, 2002; Gilreath, 2003; Bilyeu, Gaunt, & Glogowski, 2000; Mech, 1996). Unfortunately, participant overviews are of limited value in evaluating the efficacy of leadership training. These reviews do little to address the questions of whether the participants actually learned anything new, whether that learning is retained and applied in the workplace, and whether that knowledge or those skills improved the individual or improved workplace
performance. From a reading of these overviews, as well as the authors’ experience with postworkshop evaluations, the most that can be gleaned from self-reporting about library leadership programs is that reporting participants are “satisfied,” believe they received “benefits,” and were able to extend their “professional networking.”

The other types of evaluations available consist mainly of summaries of post-training evaluations. Most training programs end with participants completing evaluation forms. Some programs also use pretests to assess what participants expect or want to learn and posttests to determine whether their expectations were met. Only a few reports are available that summarize these types of results; presumably most evaluation results remain unpublished in the library literature. A search of deeper Web sources did not reveal much in the way of gray literature, such as reports or unpublished documents.

Evaluation Research and Criteria on Library Leadership Development

This section summarizes the available published evaluation results from library leadership programs. Three examples of more in-depth evaluations include research on the Northwest Career Development Assessment Center (Hiatt, 1992); the Stanford-California Institute (Hinman & Williams, 2002); and the Snowbird Institute (Neely & Winston, 1999). All rely on multiple evaluations.

Hiatt’s work reports on multiple evaluation results conducted to assess the efficacy of the Northwest Career Development and Assessment Center for Librarians in developing specific leadership skills among librarians in the Northwest. Three evaluation rounds were conducted by Battelle Research and by Hiatt. Neely and Winston’s research examined the effect of the Snowbird Institute on the 213 participants who attended during the years 1990–98. Their objective was to determine the impact of the program on the career background and career progression of participants subsequent to participation in the institute; to detect whether there was an impact on the level and type of involvement in leadership and professional activities; and to assess participant perceptions of the impact of the program on their career development (Neely & Winston, 1999).

Holly Hinman and Joan Frye Williams prepared an evaluation of all three of the Stanford-California Twenty-First-Century Library Institutes. Their summative report provides data on each of the evaluator-administered surveys that were conducted after the institute to identify what participants had learned, how participants intended to apply what they had learned, and how participants intended to use information to change their organizations. The evaluation report provides an overview of the entire evaluation process.

Building upon the three summative reports, this section discusses leadership development results organized according to criteria derived from
the management literature and used in the library literature to support and justify the need for leadership development. The criteria used are: (1) participant expectations and satisfaction; (2) individual personal development; (3) career advancement and mobility; (4) development of desired leadership skills; (5) formation of leadership cohorts; and (6) organizational impact or performance. Two other criteria are given in the literature as reasons for leadership development: recruitment to the profession and creating diversity among library leadership. The available evaluation materials do not include sufficient discussion of results in these areas to discuss them in any detail, and therefore they are omitted from this review.

Participant Expectations and Satisfaction

There is a considerable body of information about what participants say they wish to accomplish by participation in leadership training. The Stanford-California Institute participants, for example, had many expectations; frequently these typically track the hopes expressed by participants in other leadership programs. In summary, Stanford-California Institute participants sought the following from leadership training: (1) to gain inspiration from new ideas; (2) to develop leadership skills; (3) to learn how to implement change, communicate with others, lead others, and work with people with different styles; (4) to learn to motivate an entrenched workforce; (5) to create a vision; (6) to advance their careers; (7) to develop their personal characteristics; (8) to increase assertiveness and self confidence; (9) to experience personal rejuvenation; (10) to gain access to experts and resources on library issues; (11) to network with colleagues; and (12) to learn about the role of information technology. The evaluators concluded that the participants in the first institute (2000) “arrived at the Institute with a diverse range of expectations, many of which were fulfilled” (Hinman & Williams, 2002, p. 21). The evaluators also concluded that “[o]verall, participants were exceptionally pleased with the Institute experience and gave it a ‘very satisfied’ rating on the survey” (Hinman & Williams, 2002, p. 21). The 2000 postinstitute evaluations conducted by the Evaluation and Training Institute found that 94 percent of the participants said the results of their participation were what they had hoped. When asked if the institute met their expectations, 86 percent said “yes” in 2000 and 96 percent said “yes” in 2001 (Hinman & Williams, 2002, p. 37).

Individual Self-Development

Those participants at the Northwest Assessment Center who self-reported indicated they prioritized their continuing education needs and could successfully identify their personal skills on which to build their career goals. They had attained a level of self-knowledge useful for life and career planning, acquired managerial information and skills they could use in their organizations, and achieved an understanding of what higher managerial responsibility would entail. Thirty-four percent of the Assessment Center
participants reported improved self-awareness, and 16 percent said their self-confidence increased as a result of undergoing the Assessment Center process.

The Stanford-California Institute participants also reported that participation in the institute made a difference in their personal development. Seventy-seven percent said they would take more risk, 80 percent said their confidence in their own leadership ability had increased, 90 percent said the institute had influenced their careers, and 94 percent said they had changed their thinking about professional issues since attending the institute (Hinman & Williams, 2002).

Results of various evaluations by participants in other programs also speak of personal development. A participant in the ACRL Harvard program said, “I’ve learned a lot about my own organization, my leaders . . . and most importantly about myself” (Saunders, 1999).

A TALL Texan Institute participant said, “The Institute gave me an opportunity to zero in on positive ways to improve what I am and to focus on the direction my life is taking” (Berry, 2002). Results from the postinstitute evaluation of the Nevada Leadership Institute conducted in 2003 found that participants all responded in a strong positive manner to the program. They felt the institute had helped them to examine their personal leadership style, to develop a vision for the future, to gain knowledge about leadership, and to clarify their professional goals (Wetherbee & Mason, 2003).

Career Advancement and Mobility

The Stanford-California Institute evaluation for career advancement and mobility compared a control group with a treatment group (those who attended the institute) in order to determine if there were differences between the two groups that might have occurred as a result of the leadership training. Of the participants, only 24 percent had changed jobs or received a promotion since attending. For the control group, 45 percent had changed jobs or received a promotion. “Seventy-six of the participants felt the Institute had had some impact on their career move” (Hinman & Williams, 2002, p. 36). These results were similar for the control group. The evaluators concluded that members of the control group had more career mobility but otherwise were similar to the institute participants in these dimensions.

The Snowbird assessment found 38.6 percent of the participants were still in the same positions they occupied before attending the institute. Thirty percent had become heads of branches or departments. Nearly 7 percent were assistant or associate deans or directors, and 14 percent were deans or directors (Neely & Winston, 1999, p. 6).

The Snowbird study did not use a control group, and therefore it is not possible to determine whether the Snowbird participants were more successful in their career development than others who did not attend. In
assessing participants’ self-reported attitudes to the institute, 40 percent responded that the institute contributed somewhat to their obtaining subsequent positions, while 19 percent report that it contributed a great deal; 48.6 percent said that they believed their career paths would have been different without the Snowbird experience. The research authors concluded that it “is difficult to identify a direct relationship between participation in the Snowbird Leadership Institute in terms of career progression and greater participation in leadership activities. . . . It is difficult to determine the relationship between the impact of the institute and the attainment of subsequent positions” (Neely & Winston, 1999, p. 10).

Of the Assessment Center participating librarians, 80 percent reported that participating in the assessment process improved their career mobility. Hiatt also followed up with librarians after ten years and found that the participants still felt that their participation had been valuable to them, but not all of the participants felt it had had an impact on their career (Hiatt, 1992, p. 539).

**Leadership Activities**

For the Stanford-California Institute participants, 28 percent had been elected or appointed to a professional association, and 25 percent had authored an article for a professional publication. Forty percent had delivered a presentation at a conference, and 65 percent had mentored someone since the institute. The results for the control group, however, were similar. Twenty-nine percent of the control group had been elected or appointed to office in a professional association; 24 percent had authored an article for a professional publication. Thirty-one percent had delivered a presentation at a conference, and 53 percent had mentored someone since the institute.

Snowbird Institute survey results show that the number of institute participants who had published journal articles, books, book chapters, book reviews, and conference papers had all increased in relationship to the number of individuals who had participated in these activities before attending Snowbird. The authors suggest caution in interpreting these numbers since they point out that nearly 40 percent of the survey respondents are still in the same position as when they attended the institute (Neely & Winston, 1999, pp. 8, 10). They also note that elapsed time may have an influence on these numbers as participants move forward in their careers. It is not yet possible to determine what the long-term effect of increased access to leadership training for librarians will be. The efficacy of these programs is not proven, but it seems clear that at the level of individual participation, they clearly respond to felt needs.

**Organizational Impact**

Seventy-nine percent of Stanford-California Institute participants indicated that they had suggested changes in their organization as a result
of attending the institute, and 81 percent saw their changes implemented. Changes included implementing mentoring, improved understanding of a service group, increased adoption of information technology, added staff training and development, improved leadership skills, and improved customer service. In the control group, however, 86 percent had suggested changes, and 89 percent had had their changes implemented—percentages higher than for the institute participants. The conclusion of the authors of the evaluation report after an analysis of the detailed responses from the control group was “It is evident that the Institute participants displayed more creative thinking and broader understanding of libraries” (Hinman & Williams, 2002, p. 47). This does not explain, however, why the control group performed better than their institute counterparts in on-the-job success in implementing changes.

Twenty-four percent of the librarians in the study group said their job performance had improved as a result of the Assessment Center process (Hiatt, 1992. p. 530). Assessment Center librarians also said the leadership process had helped them to acquire managerial information and skills they could use in their organizations, as well as achieve an understanding of what higher managerial responsibility would entail (Hiatt, 1992, p. 537).

Formation of Leadership Cohorts

Collegiality can play an important role in both the positive or negative experiences of leadership development participants, and in long-term relationships it can have an impact on career development and mobility. The Stanford-California Institute participants said that 81 percent of them had remained in contact through listservs and email (62 percent), personal meetings (32 percent), and professional association contacts (44 percent). Seventy-six percent of Snowbird Institute attendees reported that collegial relationships were important, particularly informal interactions with other participants, as opposed to listserv activities or collegial reunions.

Problems with Interpreting Impacts of Leadership Training

Aside from the three studies just discussed, very few published evaluations on library leadership training programs have been designed to yield stable and valid results about the impact of these programs on the abilities and careers of training program participants. Far too much of the evaluation information that is available from most leadership programs is self-reports about participant experiences; obviously this does not help to isolate direct impacts of these programs. Another important hindrance to better outcomes assessment of library leadership training is the lack of a clear and agreed definition of “leadership skills.” The absence of a widely accepted definition of leadership skills for librarians is a substantial barrier to evaluation of program impact, as is the lack of a shared or defined definition of what constitutes a “leadership skill.” In the absence of defined
criteria, it is difficult to determine through research the efficacy of training programs.

While the Stanford-California Institute, Assessment Center, and Snowbird Institute evaluations have endeavored to improve data collection and evaluation by using multiple methods of collecting data, control groups, and even longitudinal data, problems still exist with data interpretation. For instance, the control group and treatment groups are very similar in composition, and this raises questions about whether the control and participant groups in these studies really are two independent groups that can be compared with one another.

As noted earlier, the Assessment Center research and the Stanford-California Institute research found that the comparison between the assessment group and the control group yielded only minor differences. In both cases, the control group and the treatment group, rather than having been drawn from two separate pools, seem to be drawn from the same group. Therefore, the experimental design using a control group is not useful for detecting meaningful differences in the two groups as a result of leadership development training. As the researchers noted in the evaluation of the Assessment Center, both the assessment group and applicant group were similar in that they both were composed of “highly motivated, career-oriented groups of librarians” (Hiatt, 1992, p. 537).

Although the studies did conduct longitudinal evaluations of participants, difficulties arise in interpreting whether participants publish more or engage in more professional activities due to their leadership training or because of other factors that have not been identified. More research that controls for the passage of time and other possible external factors is needed to better understand the interrelationships between leadership development training and subsequent career activities.

**Conclusion**

There is no doubt that leadership concepts and leadership training have diffused broadly into the library profession. Due to significant changes in recruitment for the profession, and the recognized need for leaders at all levels of libraries, leadership training has been developed and offered by libraries, professional organizations, and state library professional associations, as well as academic and nonprofit foundations. Most of the leadership training programs appear to have been developed by the profession for the profession. These programs touch library personnel, degreed and otherwise, at various career levels. Interestingly, those institutions now making significant investments in leadership training for librarians do not appear to include any significant leadership programs developed or offered by library and information science programs. While faculty from some schools are involved in teaching in one or more library leadership programs, no
programs hosted by library schools were identified. It may be that graduate schools offer courses on leadership, but we did not examine the curriculum offerings of the different schools to determine if schools are offering a course titled “Leadership.”

It is also clear that the package of required leadership skills for librarians and other workers is not a one-size-fits-all list. In fact, there continues to be considerable variety in ideas about an appropriate library-related set of leadership skills, or, to use a current term, competencies. Despite the work that has been done on defining library leadership competencies by various organizations and associations, the field awaits an accepted set of core leadership competencies for the profession or for any subset of the profession. The lack of an agreed-upon set or sets of core competencies means that, although training programs are often worthwhile and beneficial to individual participants, there is no accurate way to determine if the most effective skills are being taught to leaders and aspiring leaders. More work needs to be done to clarify a library-focused list of leadership competencies. Program planners could then use this conceptual foundation as a starting point for designing leadership development programs.

The review of leadership and leadership development training makes it clear that, although many training programs have been developed and conducted successfully, the evaluation methods used to date to assess the success of these programs have, in most cases, not yielded definitive results about the success or failure of programs to achieve their stated objectives, such as individual personal development, career mobility, workplace improvement, and so forth. Most evaluation methods employed to date have measured short-term goals, including participants’ self-assessments of whether the training met expectations and the extent of their personal satisfaction with the training. For the future, if the designers of leadership training hope to claim that such programs improve productivity and achieve an economic payoff for libraries, better evaluation methods must be developed and used in a systematic way. The authors believe that two basic improvements would be very helpful. First, evaluators must more carefully define the experimental design by using trainee control groups that are truly different from the target trainee group. Second, leadership program advocates should conduct more longitudinal research to determine what happens to leadership development participants over two years, five years, and longer. These two improvements will be good steps toward better evaluation and will increase understanding of what works and does not work in leadership development. A third and perhaps a much more difficult goal to attain would be a concerted effort within the profession to clearly define what librarians really mean when they use the term “leadership.” These changes may help leadership training designers to achieve the sought-after and intended results of investments in individual leadership development.

Looking to the future, the library profession is expected to undergo
a number of significant changes in the coming decade. One of the most important changes will be the predicted retirement of a large number of librarians as they reach retirement age. Libraries will undoubtedly experience a loss of a large number of library leaders, and libraries and library organizations must continue to expand leadership training if there is to be a new cohort of leaders ready to take over. The workforce in all types of libraries is becoming more diverse, reflecting the growing diversity in the United States overall. A few leadership programs have already been developed to recruit and develop more library leaders from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities, and this effort should be continued and expanded in the future.

Given the foregoing analysis of the current state of library leadership training, the authors also recommend that library schools and/or other professional bodies define a leadership training research agenda to be completed in the next ten years. Such an agenda would have as its focus the creation of a set of tools that could measurably improve library leadership. A first step would be the development of a clear and broadly accepted set of general library leadership competencies for all types of library settings. The second step would be the vigorous promotion of these competencies in library training and educational venues of all types.

NOTE

REFERENCES


The Promise of Appreciative Inquiry in Library Organizations

MAUREEN SULLIVAN

Abstract

Appreciative Inquiry is a different approach to organizational development, one that calls for the deliberate search for what contributes to organizational effectiveness and excellence. Appreciative Inquiry is a practical philosophy that assumes the organization is a “mystery” and a “marvel” to be embraced, not a problem to be solved (Cooperrider & Srivastava, 1987, p. 131). The author’s experience with this different approach to organizational development reveals its power to unleash the creative energy within library organizations. This article describes the principles, process, and some of the practices of Appreciative Inquiry.

Introduction

Library organizations, like so many other types of organizations today, face the need for significant transformation in the way they are organized, the work they do, the ways in which they perform this work, and in how they meet the challenges of staying relevant and meeting the needs and expectations of their various constituent groups. Leaders of all types of libraries and the staff who work with them continually face new and more complex problems. Libraries have a long history of tackling these challenges and problems with such organizational development efforts as strategic planning, restructuring, redesigning work, and project management. Traditionally such planned change efforts have operated from the premise that the place to begin is with what is wrong, what is not working well, or what needs to change. This approach has been described by some as a “deficit-based” approach, one that focuses on the negative. Some characteristics of
this deficit-based thinking are an emphasis on problems; attention to the people who are perceived to be causing these problems; a tendency to be critical of ideas, accomplishments, and the people involved; and a focus on resources that are limited or lacking.

Appreciative Inquiry offers a compelling alternative—the quest for the best possible situation. In this quest the focus is on possibilities, not problems; meaningful involvement of people to enable them to contribute their best thinking; attention to learning and generative thinking; collaboration and building trusting relationships; and a focus on existing resources and how to make the best use of them.

**APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY DEFINED**

Appreciative Inquiry is an approach to planned change that begins with careful attention to and the identification of what has worked in the past and what works in the present. Appreciative Inquiry is a collaborative and highly participative, system-wide approach to seeking, identifying, and enhancing the “life-giving forces” that are present when a system is performing optimally in human, economic, and organizational terms. It is a journey during which profound knowledge of a human system at its moments of wonder is uncovered and used to co-construct the best and highest future of that system. (Watkins & Mohr, 2001, pp. 14–15)

Appreciative Inquiry is the “study and exploration of what gives life to human systems when they function at their best. This approach to personal change and organization change is based on the assumption that questions and dialogue about strengths, successes, values, hopes, and dreams are themselves transformational” (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003, p. 1).

Appreciative Inquiry is an approach to the development of human systems that views those systems as life-giving and enhancing; ones that contain positive forces to be understood and embraced. Those life-giving forces emerge from our conversations as a result of our assumptions, values, beliefs, and images. Those conversations govern our choice of actions. If the conversations are energizing and life affirming then the “whole” system can be involved in co-constructing the desired future.

Appreciative Inquiry is a strategy for change that begins with the identification of the “best of what is” to enable stakeholders to pursue their dreams and visions of “what could be.” It is a process of collaborative inquiry to clarify the strengths, positive experiences, “good news,” achievements, and best qualities of a group, an organization, a situation, a relationship, or an individual. It is a means to create change based upon the premise that we can effectively move forward if we know what has worked in the past. It is an approach to organizational development that quickly engages people in an exploration of what they value most about their work. It brings forth peak experiences and examples of excellence to enable the creation of the
future organizations that will embody their highest aspirations. As Table 1 illustrates, it is the opposite of the traditional problem-solving approach (Hammond, 1996, p. 24).

Appreciative Inquiry has been applied around the world in a variety of types of organizations, including both those with staff represented by unions and those without unions. It also has been applied in community organizations and in small group work. It is now an established approach to organizational development that has been used successfully with diversity programs, team building, strategic planning, work redesign, restructuring, and transforming organizational culture. The practice of Appreciative Inquiry reflects the values and fundamental principles of organizational development. In fact, it represents a return to the tenets espoused by some of the early developers of the field, for example, Kurt Lewin, Richard Beckhard, Chris Argyris, and Douglas McGregor.

**Origins of Appreciative Inquiry**

In 1980 David Cooperrider, then a doctoral student at Case Western Reserve University, was engaged in an organizational diagnosis at the Cleveland Clinic. Under the guidance of his advisor, Dr. Suresh Srivastava, he had the insight to shift from the identification and analysis of what was and was not working to a focus on the identification of the factors that were contributing to the clinic’s effectiveness. Cooperrider first conducted a series of interviews with clinic staff to learn what was wrong. During the interviews, he began to notice factors in some parts of the organization that contributed to organizational effectiveness. Cooperrider refocused his work to adopt an “appreciative” approach, to give attention to the strengths, achievements, and positive forces that contributed to excellence. Clinic leaders invited him to help them create an approach to their practice based upon “positive inquiry.” As Cooperrider formalized his theory of change he laid the foundation for Appreciative Inquiry. This early work led to a paradigm shift in how to understand an organizational system (Watkins & Mohr, 2001, pp. 15–21).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Traditional Problem Solving vs. Appreciative Inquiry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic Assumption</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An organization is a problem to be solved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify the problem based upon a “felt need”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of causes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of possible solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action planning (treatment)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some of the Research That Supports Appreciative Inquiry

As Appreciative Inquiry has developed as a system of thought in the past two decades, research in other areas has yielded results that support an appreciative or positive approach to change. These include the following:

- Research on the placebo effect demonstrates that patients show marked physical, psychological, and emotional improvement in their symptoms when they believe they are taking effective medicine, even when that treatment is a sugar pill.
- The Pygmalion Effect studies demonstrated the power that another person’s image and expectations can have on an individual’s performance. Students in a class were divided randomly into two subgroups. Teachers were told that one group of students was intelligent, hardworking, and successful and that a second group of students was not very bright, not well-behaved, and performed poorly. Within a single semester, those who were labeled poor students were performing poorly and those who were labeled successful were doing well. The key conclusion from these studies is that individuals rise to the level of the images and expectations others have of them.
- Performance theory in sports includes a number of examples in which a shift to a focus on the positive and doing the right thing, and away from a focus on what one is doing incorrectly has indeed led to improvement. A positive affirmation approach causes one’s whole body to respond to what the mind imagines to be possible. One sees the basketball making the basket rather than thinking one should not miss the basket.

Principles of Appreciative Inquiry

The philosophy of Appreciative Inquiry is expressed in a set of eight principles that together convey the set of beliefs and values that guide practice. Whitney and Trosten-Bloom describe these principles in *The Power of Appreciative Inquiry* (2003, pp. 51–79) and explain that they are “derived from three generalized streams of thought—social constructionism, image theory, and grounded research—they suggest that human organizing and change is a positive, socially interactive process of discovering and crafting life-affirming, guiding images of the future.” Table 2 presents each of the principles and includes a slogan for remembering them.

Underlying Assumptions of Appreciative Inquiry Simply Stated

One of the most effective ways to introduce Appreciative Inquiry to library staff has been to invite them to read *The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry* (Hammond, 1996). This booklet provides an excellent introduction
Table 2. Summary of the Eight Principles of Appreciative Inquiry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Constructionist Principle</td>
<td>Words Create Worlds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizations are living, dynamic systems—“human constructions” that evolve through social interaction and communication. It is through this interaction and communication that meaning is made and that the organization evolves.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Simultaneity Principle</td>
<td>Inquiry Creates Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The questions we ask set the stage for what we discover and learn. Change begins when we begin to ask the questions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Anticipatory Principle</td>
<td>Image Inspires Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The image of the future guides current behavior in any organization. Organizations evolve in the direction of their most compelling image of the future.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Positive Principle</td>
<td>Positive Questions Lead to Positive Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive questions create the impetus and energy for change. “The more positive the questions we use to guide a team building or organization development initiative, the more long-lasting and effective the change effort” (Whitney &amp; Trosten-Bloom, 2003, p. 67).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Poetic Principle</td>
<td>We Can Choose What We Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizations are “open books—endless sources of learning, inspiration, and interpretation.” We decide what to study. The choice can be to learn what problems clients encounter in using our services or what they value in their experience. We can examine why staff morale is low or we can seek to understand what factors lead to the retention of the high performers. The choice is ours to make.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Enactment Principle</td>
<td>Acting “As If” Is Self-Fulfilling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gandhi’s “Be the change you want to see” embodies this principle. When we begin to act as if something we desire in the future is available in the present, we begin to create the vision of the future in our current reality.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wholeness Principle</td>
<td>Wholeness Brings Out the Best</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement of the whole system, everyone in the organization, brings out the best in the organization, its systems, relationships, and individual members. As a human system, an organization is the people who work in it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Free Choice Principle</td>
<td>Free Choice Liberates Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This principle is based on the premise that people are motivated and become committed to results when they are free to decide how they will contribute to organizational performance. It assumes that commitment, rather than compliance, leads to high performance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

and overview of the key concepts, including the following set of assumptions (Hammond, 1996, pp. 20–21):

1. In every society, organization, or group, something works.
2. What we focus on becomes our reality.
3. Reality is created in the moment and there are multiple realities.
4. The act of asking questions of an organization or group influences the group in some way.
5. People have more confidence and comfort to journey to the future (the unknown) when they carry forward parts of the past (the known).
6. If we carry parts of the past forward, they should be what are best about the past.
7. It is important to value differences.
8. The language we use creates our reality.

**Appreciative Inquiry in Practice**

In most libraries today the application of an Appreciative Inquiry approach to any organization development effort would require a major shift in the set of beliefs and assumptions about how to bring about change. There is a long history of experience with a problem-driven approach to planning and making change. The negative is seductive. There is a focus on problems and a strong tendency to dwell on what is wrong or not working, often without taking time to examine what is working. In a number of cases, performance assessment represents judgment of experiences, not a means to learn from them. Library human resource systems emphasize the evaluation of performance and performance appraisals, not learning and development plans or even performance improvement plans. The choice to focus on the positive requires a deep and sustained commitment to affirm the value of the positive.

The commitment of senior leadership is critical to the successful application of Appreciative Inquiry in any organizational development strategy. An important early step in developing this commitment is to educate leaders and stakeholders about the philosophy, rationale, supporting research, process, and benefits of Appreciative Inquiry as an approach to organizational development. It is essential that senior leadership make the conscious commitment to focus on the positive as the basis for change.

**Process: The 4–D Cycle**

The predominant model of the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) process is known as the AI or 4–D Cycle and is comprised of four stages: Discovery, Dream, Design, and Destiny (sometimes referred to as Delivery). This 4–D Cycle is intended to be a general description of the process to be applied to the special circumstances of an organization. As is the case with any model like this, the context in which it is used and the particular needs and challenges of the situation must be considered in its application.

While this article focuses on the application of Appreciative Inquiry to a large-scale organizational development effort, this AI Cycle can be applied in a variety of ways, informally or formally, in a small group or across an organization. Appreciative Inquiry can be used without any explanation.

A critical step to take before beginning the 4–D Cycle is to select the
topics for the focus of the Appreciative Inquiry. Topic selection needs to be done thoughtfully and carefully—what we choose to study is likely to become our new reality (Hammond, 1996, pp. 32–33).

The focus of attention in the initial stage of Discovery is to identify “the best of what is” by bringing to light examples of high performance, times when the organization achieved excellence, and experiences as well as aspects of the organization in which staff say they take pride or that they may identify as a “life-giving force.”

The key method for this search to uncover the positive is known as the Appreciative Interview. The Appreciative Interview is a means to share stories among stakeholders about their most memorable experiences and accomplishments in the area covered by the topic choice. This telling of stories and the work accomplished in the subsequent phases results in the generation of new ideas, images, assumptions—which lead to new attitudes and behaviors. Appreciative Interviews throughout the organization are a means to engage staff and build commitment as well as a means to reveal the whole story of the organization.

Some examples of questions that can be used to start an Appreciative Interview are listed below. These have proven to be effective with individuals and with groups of varying size.

1. Identify a time in your experience with this library when you felt most effective and engaged. Describe this. How did you feel? What made this situation possible?
2. What is your value to the organization? In what ways do you contribute your best? What are your strengths?
3. What do you appreciate most about this library as an organization? In what ways does it excel?
4. What are the three or four most important aspirations for the future of this library? What are the key components for its vision?
5. What are some sources of pride for you in your work?
6. Describe a leader who has influenced you. What did that person do? How did that person interact with you? Describe some specific instances in which you experienced this influence.
7. Think of a time when you felt especially creative. Describe what you were doing, what you were thinking, and what you were feeling.
8. Tell me about a peak experience in your professional work. What was it about your situation, organization, colleagues, or yourself that enabled this to occur?

The key focus of the next stage, Dream, is the creation of a vision that brings to light the collective aspirations of stakeholders. This is a time to question the status quo and to ask “what might be.” This stage is practical in that it is grounded in the stories and findings that emerged in the first
stage. It also is creative in that it calls for expansion of the organization’s capacity. Staff work together to create shared images of what the library would be like if the instances of excellence and compelling experiences discovered in the previous stage became a way of life, the norm, in the new organization.

Stage three, Design, is the opportunity for the staff to work together to construct the library organization created as a vision in the previous stage. Here staff spend time in the articulation of the desired attributes of the new organization and develop a more detailed description of the work design, structure, systems, culture, and work environment called for in the results of the Dream stage.

Destiny (sometimes referred to as Delivery) is the final stage of the 4–D Cycle. The work of this stage focuses on the individual and organizational commitments necessary to achieve the aspirations set forth in the second stage and further developed in the third stage.

**Appreciative Inquiry and the Learning Organization**

Peter Senge describes the learning organization in *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (Senge, 1990). The principles and practices of the learning organization align closely with those of Appreciative Inquiry. Each of the five disciplines of the learning organization (systems thinking, shared vision, team learning, mental models, and personal mastery) has a corresponding set of beliefs, assumptions, and practices within Appreciative Inquiry. Common elements include a belief in the capacity of people to create change; the importance of generative thinking and generative learning; collaboration as a means for learning, growth, and development; understanding the organization as an organic and dynamic human system; and a deep commitment to the power of the positive over the negative. Each has emerged out of a fundamental rethinking of what motivates and shapes human behavior in organizations.

The discipline of systems thinking is a core principle of Appreciative Inquiry. At every stage of the process, seeing the organization as a living, dynamic, whole system is fundamental to the work at that stage.

The Dream phase of the Appreciative Inquiry process is very similar to the discipline of shared vision. In fact, in this phase the work is directed at the creation of a shared vision, one that describes the organization’s aspirations for each of the areas identified in the Discovery phase. The shared vision is the articulation of the dreams of the future for those aspects most valued by the people of the organization—what staff want to carry forward to the future.

Because the process of Appreciative Inquiry assumes engagement of the whole system, the discipline of team learning comes into play with its many tools to support collaboration. The practice of dialogue—meaning-
ful conversation that seeks understanding at a deeper level and calls for balanced participation to enable the different voices to be heard—is a key tool in both Appreciative Inquiry and the learning organization.

The discipline of mental models calls for a deep awareness of the assumptions that underlie organizational behavior, a habit of surfacing and testing these assumptions, and a commitment to create new mental constructs or mindsets that will lead to positive action. This work leads to creating a readiness and openness to change.

Finally, the discipline of personal mastery is that part of the learning organization framework that directly addresses the role of the individual in the evolution and growth of the organization. Appreciative Inquiry affirms the importance of this individual role and also encourages each individual to have a clear personal vision and focus attention and energy toward what might be—in the direction of possibilities and the future. This discipline recognizes the importance of seeing reality objectively.

**Principles of the Application of Appreciative Inquiry and the Learning Organization to Libraries**

The following set of principles has evolved from my practice as a consultant in the past ten years, a practice that began with a focus on the learning organization as a framework for the transformation of library organizations. This set of guiding principles is derived from the application of both learning organization and Appreciative Inquiry approaches in a variety of library organizations.

- Recognize that library organizations are living, organic systems. Staff at all levels, from all perspectives give life to the library organization.
- Behavior in the present is influenced by the future that is anticipated. Leaders have the opportunity to bring about change by engaging staff in the 4–D Cycle and by focusing on the positive possibilities of the future.
- Both approaches are generative processes. “Learning as we go” is exciting, releases the capacity of staff, and enables the organization to become the best possible.
- Effective, relevant questions are important to the inquiry process at the heart of the work done in both approaches.
- Leaders have influence when they bring a positive focus to the inquiry and learning process.
- Continued success comes from the engagement of staff and the appreciation of their effort and commitment.
- People individually and collectively have skills, talents, and contributions to bring to life.
- Any large-scale change effort requires a commitment to continual learning, growth, and development—of the organization, of groups and teams, and of all individuals.
GETTING STARTED: SOME IDEAS FOR APPLICATION

The introduction and application of appreciative inquiry as an organizational development effort requires first and foremost that leaders in the library have a deep awareness and understanding of the principles and practices of Appreciative Inquiry. In most organizations this means a significant shift in patterns of thinking. A critical first step, therefore, in the formal introduction of Appreciative Inquiry would be for the senior leadership group to undertake the study of this approach. This study should include careful consideration of the best means to introduce library staff to Appreciative Inquiry in practice. It also is possible to begin to apply the principles and practices of Appreciative Inquiry in a less formal way. The following offers some suggestions for this approach:

1. Begin a planned change or problem-solving effort with reflective exploration of the “best of what is.” Focus on strengths, values, sources of pride, and best experiences.
2. Drop the “devil’s advocate” approach in favor of the “angel’s advocate”—ask questions to support suggestions, possible scenarios, and ideas.
3. Involve as many stakeholders as possible in the creation of a shared vision of a preferred future. The libraries at the University of Iowa, Brown University, George Washington University, the University of Maryland, and the University of Cincinnati are some examples of where this has been done successfully.
4. Identify the core elements that give life to the library. One way to do this is to clarify the core values through a process in which all staff have the opportunity to participate. This set of values can be translated to a set of behaviors for staff to practice. As one example, staff in information services and resources at Bucknell University developed a “Living Our Values” program several years ago.
5. Use the Appreciative Interview technique whenever possible. Take time to frame questions that are positive and that will generate hope, imagination, and creative thinking, such as the following: What current trend might have the most significant positive effect on the future of this library? When have you felt most creative in your work? If success were guaranteed, what bold actions would we take? Imagine twenty years into the future and all of the pressing problems of today’s libraries have been solved—what role has this library played?
6. Close meetings and other activities with a discussion of what worked well and what practices occurred that should be continued. Take time to identify individual contributions to the success of the meeting.
7. Introduce learning and development plans. Focus on an individual’s strengths and competencies as much or more than on his or her areas for development. The Tri-College Libraries in the Philadelphia area (Bryn Mawr, Haverford, and Swarthmore) collaborated a few years ago
to create a professional development program for staff in the three libraries. Their Task Force on Learning and Development produced the excellent Individual Learning and Development Plan for this purpose.

8. Create a recognition program that is an integral part of the library’s operations. Make it easy to administer, and make it possible for anyone at any time to participate. Be sure that it includes a variety of means to recognize the full range of accomplishments. A good example of such a program exists at the North Suburban Library System in Wheeling, Illinois.

9. Be mindful of the language used. Words are powerful and convey reality. Use language that conveys hope, optimism, and possibility instead of language that focuses on problems.

10. Remember the power of the Pygmalion Effect—how expectations influence performance. Expect the best performance and assume that people have the best intentions in what they do. Coach others from the perspective of building on strengths.

**Conclusion**

While Appreciative Inquiry as an approach to complex, transformational change may be new to library organizations, it is not as new to many other types of organizations. In the twenty-four years since its inception, this affirmative strategy to transform organizations has evolved into one of the most promising practices in the field of organizational development. As library leaders focus their attention on the need to transform their organizations, Appreciative Inquiry offers a means to do this that enables staff to affirm the best of the past and the present as choices are made to assure a future in which library services and programs are relevant.

One compelling choice to make in the continual whirl of change and transformation is whether to focus on the positive or the negative. Each of us—the library director, the manager, the staff member, the consultant—has the option to give attention to what is affirmative, life-giving, and valuable or to give that attention to what is wrong or needs to be fixed. Consider the benefits, personal and organizational, of spending time and energy in a positive, creative, and appreciative approach versus the often negative and stressful deficit-based approach. Professionally and personally, what is the best way to spend your time and energy?

**References**


Facilitative Leadership: One Approach to Empowering Staff and Other Stakeholders

THOMAS L. MOORE

ABSTRACT
This article defines facilitative leadership as advocated by Roger Schwarz and describes the use of this relatively new leadership approach in a public library system. It lists and defines the four core values followed in Schwarz’s approach: valid information, free and informed choice, internal commitment, and compassion. It further describes the use of left-hand column cases as developed by Chris Argyris to identify one’s own theory in use. Model one and model two theories in use as developed by Argyris are discussed. The article then briefly describes the experiences of using the Schwarz principles in a library organization.

Facilitative leadership is a term that is used for a number of different methods of providing leadership within the workplace. Many different trainers and organizations use the term. It means different things to each of them. A quick Internet search results in many hits for the term. Educators use it to describe a way of leading school change. Religious leaders use it to describe a way of leading congregations. Consultants use it to describe ways of leading organizations. One consultant group (Interaction Associates) has even registered the phrase as a trademark. All involve some sort of training in new ways to lead people or organizations.

Fran Rees is one of a handful of authors on the subject of facilitative leadership. She identifies leadership skills along a continuum from persuasion through collaboration to facilitation and says that at various times a leader must be prepared to engage each approach. She writes:
The leader who can take the role of a facilitator blends his or her role of visionary decisive leader with that of listening and empowering leader. As a facilitative leader he or she involves followers as much as possible in creating the group’s vision and purpose, carrying out the vision and purpose, and building a productive and cohesive team. Facilitation can be seen as a leadership approach. (Rees, 1998, pp. 17–18)

In another of her works, Rees identifies a basic tenet of facilitative leadership: “A facilitative leader is someone who acts on the premise that a leader does not do for others what they can do for themselves” (Rees, 2001, p. 60).

Roger Schwarz devotes a full chapter in his classic work on facilitation to defining and elaborating on the concept of facilitative leadership (Schwarz, 2002, pp. 327–343). “Facilitative leadership is a values-based, systemic leadership philosophy founded on the core values and assumptions, principles, and methods of the Skilled Facilitator approach. The facilitative leader helps groups and individuals become more effective through building their capacity to reflect on and improve the way they work” (Schwarz, 2002, p. 327). Following a discussion of the need for a new approach to leadership, Schwarz continues: “Organizations need the type of leader who works from a set of core values consistent with the concepts of empowerment, commitment, collaboration, learning, and partnership. The core values and principles underlying the Skilled Facilitator approach constitute a foundation for becoming such a leader—what I call a facilitative leader” (Schwarz, 2002, p. 330). He also adds that facilitative leadership can be practiced by anyone in an organization, regardless of level or leadership responsibility (Schwarz, 2002, p. 328). The particular method of facilitative leadership that I have employed for the past decade is based upon Schwarz’s work.

The approach described by Schwarz and employed in his facilitation training and consultation activities is based on an explicit set of core values that work in any circumstance, be it personal or professional. Chris Argyris and Donald Schoen initially developed the concepts that led to the articulation of these core values. Schwarz refined and codified them as core values: valid information, free and informed choice, and internal commitment. While simply stated, these core values have a depth of import that needs further explanation. In the last edition of his book, Schwarz added a fourth core value that he named compassion.

Core values are the principles that guide one’s actions in all aspects of one’s life. In most instances these core values or underlying beliefs are implicitly understood but usually are not explicitly articulated. What Schwarz has done is to articulate the core values by which he wants to live his life. He has articulated them in such a way that others may choose to adopt them as their guiding principles as well. These four core values are the foundation upon which Schwarz has based his brand of facilitative leadership. What follows is a fuller discussion of what these core values mean within
the context of Schwarz’s facilitative leadership. It is worth noting that, in many approaches to leadership, the core values underlying them are not articulated and have to be inferred through the actions that are the result of following the particular approach chosen. The premises behind the core values are the following:

It is not possible to make good and consistent decisions without valid information. Valid information is information that is independently confirmable. It should relate directly to the subject at hand. No parts of the information can be held back, including one’s own feelings and assumptions that influence how the issue may be addressed. This core value encourages the use of specific examples that help illustrate the issues being discussed so that all involved can understand what is meant. An important element of this core value is to share the reasoning why one believes that the conclusions reached are valid and true. A good test for sharing information might be, “If I am thinking it, I probably ought to share what I am thinking, even when what I am thinking is not very pleasant.”

Free and informed choice relies on the first core value to provide the valid information for the informed portion of this value. Because one has valid information it is possible to make a decision that is free of outside pressures. When one makes a decision or commitment within this framework, she is confident that the choice is one that she can carry out because the decision is truly hers and has been made on the best information available. Because of necessary societal and workplace rules and regulations, all decisions are not necessarily free in the strict sense of the word. While one may be able to freely choose not to follow workplace regulations, one of the consequences of not following those regulations may well be that continued employment is no longer possible. It is very important that those societal and workplace rules and regulations be made known, so that informed choices within those constraints are possible.

The logical consequence of free and informed choice is internal commitment. This internal commitment to the decision happens because the individual knows that he has all of the relevant information that was necessary to make the decision and that he made it knowing all of the restraints and consequences. Because of this the person owns and willingly lives with the decision. There is another component of internal commitment that might not be obvious at first: being internally committed to seeking valid information in relation to the decision. This component keeps the decision a dynamic one. It means that it is not possible to make a decision and never have to think about it again. It means being open to information that might not support your decision.

These three core values work together in a reinforcing circle. One first seeks and shares valid information, uses that valid information to make an informed decision, and is internally committed to the decision and to continuing to seek valid information.
The fourth core value of compassion is not as clearly defined as the first three. One of the reasons for this is that the word compassion has many meanings already imbedded in it that are not what Schwarz ascribes to this value. The difficulty with this value is that it is almost easier to say what it is not than what it is. Compassion is the ability to temporarily suspend judgment when listening to others. One suspends judgment so that he can truly understand the other person’s viewpoint. By doing this the listener is able to demonstrate a genuine concern for and interest in what other people have to say. Better understanding does result in an opportunity to further use the other core values. Compassion means that one intends to try to understand the other person’s point of view, to empathize with that person, and to be willing to help that person if that is the appropriate action. With compassion the suspension of judgment is only temporary. At some point the listener must decide if the information gathered meets the test of validity so that it can be used as part of the decision-making process. Compassion does not mean rescue. It does not mean feeling sorry for someone. It does not mean discounting the other person’s ability to make a decision or act in a way consistent with the core values.

I had the opportunity to speak with Roger Schwarz as he was developing his thinking on the meaning and purpose of this core value. One of the critiques that Schwarz had received was that his ground rules were very rational and had little if any room for emotion in them. Schwarz’s response was to add an element that he believes is less rational and more emotive. He struggled to find a word to describe this element. He wanted a word free from connotations that might be different from what he wanted. He was unable to find such a word, so he settled on compassion.

The core values of facilitative leadership are the underlying principles that guide the actions of a facilitative leader. Schwarz has developed a set of ground rules that help individuals and groups to act in ways that are consistent with those core values. The original list was made up of sixteen different ground rules, which have since been condensed into the nine listed in Table 1. These ground rules are action strategies that can be used in groups by agreement or by the facilitative leader on his own. When used appropriately, these action strategies assist the facilitative leader to live the core values.

When teaching about facilitative leadership, Schwarz uses a technique first used by Chris Argyris and called the left-hand column exercise (Argyris, 1999, p. 61). This exercise helps a leader to identify and explore the various action strategies that he uses as a leader. What Argyris identified was that many, if not most, leaders said they would act in one way, but during difficult encounters with others did not act that way. He identified this tendency through the left-hand column exercise. This is how it works: Individuals are asked to remember a difficult conversation they had with an individual or in a group setting. The person remembering the conversation is asked to
write down the conversation as best he can remember it on the right half of a sheet of paper. He is asked to record all of the conversation, not just what he said. Argyris then asks the participant to write down what he was thinking in the left-hand column of the paper. What Argyris discovered was that what participants thought and what they said were not the same thing. In addition, what they did was not in alignment with what they said they would do as a leader. Argyris called what an individual said they would do their espoused theory. He called what they did their theory in use. He also identified two theories of action (Argyris, 1999, p. 60). He called them model one and model two. He identifies the model one theory as unilateral control, win-lose theory. Model two theory is a mutual learning, win-win theory. Argyris says that 98 percent of managers across the world operate in a model one frame. What Argyris also found was that the model one frame did not get the results that managers using it wanted. Frequently they got just the opposite result. He attributes this result in part to not sharing all relevant information and not testing the underlying assumptions that guide one’s actions. Because the model two theory of action is based on sharing relevant information necessary to make good decisions, and results in fewer errors, Argyris advocates model two as the preferred model, since managers using that model get better results—results more in line with what they want.

By using the left-hand column exercise, it is possible to discover one’s own theory in use. Many of us who have written a left-hand column exercise are surprised to find out that our theory in use does not match our espoused theory. The core values of facilitative leadership, as advocated by Schwarz, make it possible for a person to bring his theory in use and his espoused theory into closer alignment, especially if the espoused theory is closer to model two and the theory in use is closer to model one.

Facilitative leadership is a method of leadership that fits well into libraries because it is compatible with other tools and principles that are already in use in libraries. It provides built-in tests to see if the other tools are compatible and fit into the core values.

Table 1. The Nine Ground Rules Roger Schwarz Recommends for Effective Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ground Rule</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test assumptions and inferences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Share all relevant information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use specific examples and agree on what important words mean.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explain your reasoning and intent.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus on interests, not positions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Combine advocacy and inquiry.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jointly design next steps and ways to test disagreements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discuss undiscussable issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use a decision-making rule that generates the level of commitment needed.</td>
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Some other tools that I have found to be compatible with facilitative leadership are the Myers-Briggs Type Inventory (MBTI), Systems Thinking (Senge, 1994), various problem solving models, the stewardship principles advocated by Peter Block (Block, 1993), and the leadership concepts of Kouzes and Posner (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). These tools all can help understanding of others or give a framework that is compatible with Schwarz’s framework. The MBTI helps one understand how people are different and how they are the same. Systems Thinking helps one see how everything is connected.

If one is using different tools as a leader in an organization, Schwarz’s core values provide tests that will show how compatible these tools are. The simplest that I can think of is the use of anonymous feedback in a 360–degree evaluation tool. If the feedback is anonymous, it is pretty difficult for the facilitative leader to test the validity of the information by talking to the evaluator. The unstated, untested, underlying premise of such a system is that honest feedback cannot occur unless the one giving feedback remains anonymous. Schwarz would advocate that one of the most important pieces of information when getting 360–degree feedback is who is giving the feedback. By being able to check with the evaluator to find out what he meant if there is a lack of clarity or a disagreement about what is reported, the person being evaluated is able to discover information that would be impossible to gain if the evaluator remained anonymous. The person receiving the evaluation is able to understand why the rater says what he says, and that makes for a better evaluation tool.

In the Wake County Public Library System, nearly forty staff members have been trained in the principles of facilitative leadership. System administrators believe that all staff members are leaders, so the training has not been limited to the few administrators of the system. All staff attempt to practice the skills of the facilitative leader every day. They hang up postersized copies of the core values and ground rules in meeting spaces and in their offices. They constantly try to verify information as valid by using the many tools that the ground rules provide. Sometimes they succeed, and sometimes they fail. Leadership using these skills is not an easy task. It is not possible to cruise along on automatic pilot and use these skills. It is important to consciously keep the values in mind as one continues through the day. This is especially true during stressful times, for that is the time when one is less likely to follow these principles.

The Wake County Public Library System has been using the principles of facilitative leadership for more than eight years. I am aware of at least one other library that has embraced a form of facilitative leadership—the University of Arizona Library. Some local governments in North Carolina have invested significant time and effort to implement facilitative leadership within their structure. Examples include the City of Laurinburg and the City of Fayetteville. Laurinburg’s experience has been documented in
the literature (Davidson & McMahon, 1999). Each of these cities has been practicing these principles for at least five years, and many other communities have embraced facilitative leadership. The work by Svara and associates reflects on that experience (Svara, 1994).

Facilitation is not rescue. Facilitation helps people do things they might not be able to do on their own, or at least need help doing on their own. Facilitation does not do things for people that they can do on their own. Facilitative leadership helps people to better understand each other so that common goals can be established, agreed upon, committed to, and reached.

Facilitative leadership has helped the staff of the Wake County Library System reach better decisions, learn from their mistakes, and engage in more meaningful conversations than before. The library system is a human organization, so it still fails to do what the staff says it wants to do. The big difference is that now the staff recognize when that happens and use those occasions to analyze why it happened so that they really learn from their mistakes. By taking the time to figure out how the mistakes happened, by sharing the information that led the group to define what happened as a mistake, and by not assigning blame, this organization is able to construct more effective actions when correcting their mistakes. They are also able to give guidance for future situations so that the same type of mistake does not happen again.

This was best illustrated when a new hire was brought on board. Those who were involved in the hiring decision each had small doubts about the new hire, but they did not share them with each other. The new hire did not successfully integrate into the system and eventually left. After the individual left, those involved in the initial hire shared their initial doubts with each other and were surprised to learn that they each had similar doubts. Had they shared them initially, more time would have been spent with the candidate. The group also agreed that, for all future hires, they would share with all involved in the hiring decision all of their concerns. While this may seem obvious to some, this group found it freeing. By sharing everything they thought about potential job candidates, they were able to discuss all strengths and weaknesses and to address those with the candidates themselves. By following this process in the future, the staff believes that it will hire people who better fit into the organization. The evidence from recent hires seems to support that belief.

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Organizational Development, Leadership, Change, and the Future of Libraries

Denise Stephens and Keith Russell

Abstract
This article discusses the actual and potential use of organizational development (OD) premises and practices in libraries. Several academic research libraries have adopted an OD approach in order to create and maintain a healthy organization, improve operations and culture, and anticipate and manage change. There are many reasons for this trend, including a natural resonance between library cultures and the underlying philosophy of OD. Aspects of change management are discussed, along with leadership issues. The article cites many information resources from several disciplines that may be useful as library organizations evolve.

Introduction
As we complete this issue of Library Trends on organizational development (OD) and leadership, we would like to share our observations, comments, and opinions regarding OD, leadership, change, and other library concerns. To a large extent, our commentary is based on a combined fifty years of experience exploring the applications of OD in academic, special, and national research libraries. As we developed the concept for this Library Trends issue, recruited and worked with authors and the Library Trends staff, and advised authors on content and editorial issues, we also reviewed related literature in library and information science, organizational development, and several other disciplines. Not surprisingly, we found many of our experience-based views reinforced, while others were challenged or expanded.

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We share several beliefs, premises, and values that underlie our approach to organizational issues, change, and leadership:

1. *Library employees are an underutilized (and often undervalued) resource.* Every person working in a library has a unique contribution to make toward the success of the organization, provided that person is committed to the mission of the library and his/her values are consistent with organizational values. Many of the skills employees bring to the job are never utilized. More and more employees today (but not all) seek to be more fully engaged in the organization and its mission and to use more of their skills and knowledge in the workplace. At the same time, organizations are beginning to recognize the tremendous untapped potential within their employees. In the business literature, authors such as Drucker (2002), Meister (1998), Paton, Taylor, & Storey (2004), and Pfeffer (1998) recognize that corporations definitely need to pay attention to human capital issues.

2. *Group processes in libraries can be improved.* Much of the work of libraries is accomplished with two or more staff members working together, whether in work teams, committees, or task forces. Effective group processes are essential to the success of the organization, and every employee should have some familiarity with facilitation processes—whether or not that employee ever leads a meeting or supervises another employee. Some libraries routinely offer facilitation training. Schwarz (2002) is often considered the authoritative scholarly work on group facilitation. Moore (2004) discusses practical experience combining facilitation and leadership in a public library system.

3. *Libraries as organizations can be structured and operated more effectively.* Library organizations are often incredibly complex, sometimes with incompatible (even contradictory) internal systems that undermine the success of the organization and its staff. Organizations are not perfect, but they can be improved. OD as a discipline offers an excellent foundation and a research-based set of tools and approaches for running effective organizations of all kinds, including libraries. In the future, another discipline or approach may emerge to eclipse OD, but at the present time it is a proven and sound approach. Holloway (2004) describes the impact of OD in some academic research libraries.

4. *Leadership is critical in libraries, and all employees should be seen (and developed) as leaders.* There are many models for leadership, and we tend to favor those that may acknowledge that in some circumstances top-down management does work, but in most circumstances other approaches are more effective in creating a healthy work environment, utilizing human resources, engaging employees, meeting customer needs, and in other ways fulfilling the mission of the organization. In our view, libraries should actively experiment with a wide range of leadership styles. We are also intrigued by the work of several authors who view every employee as...
a leader (at one level or another, in various ways) and who recommend leadership training for everyone (Badaracco, 2002; Raelin, 2003). We believe that leadership skills can be improved through training, mentoring, and other experiences. Mason & Wetherbee (2004) describe current leadership development programs that focus on library employees and comment on the structure and evaluation of these programs.

5. **Positive and empowering approaches to managing and leading libraries are more effective than some traditional approaches.** We believe the current movement toward positive approaches to individuals and organizations has significant potential for reshaping and invigorating libraries and other organizations. Various authors have written on both the theory and application of this approach (a) in broadening our definition of human potential (for example, Buckingham & Clifton, 2001; Gardner, 1983, 1999); (b) in focusing on positive psychology and related topics (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Snyder & Lopez, 2002; Turner, Barling, & Zacharatos, 2002; Wright, 2003); (c) in applying appreciative inquiry, an approach to identifying what works well in an organization and how the organization can do more of the same (Sullivan, 2004); and (d) in taking action to improve often-dreaded performance appraisals so that they are more effective for both the employee and the organization (Coens & Jenkins, 2000). *How can libraries further embrace the results of such research and make their cultures and environments more positive for people who work, study, and do research in their physical as well as virtual spaces?*

6. **Change in libraries can be anticipated, planned, and implemented in better ways.** The library community is well aware of the impacts of rapidly changing information technology, evolving user expectations and information-seeking behaviors, and changes in information publishing and dissemination. It is unclear, however, whether awareness of these driving environmental issues equals understanding and whether the knowledge of these issues is applied to planning and implementation of change in library organizations. Hiller and Self (2004) note the methodology of systematic assessment in several libraries’ planning efforts. Deiss (2004) ventures into rarely trod territory to discuss the organizational choices (presented as dichotomies) and risks faced by libraries seeking to implement meaningful change. Each library organization is unique. Nevertheless, generalized documentation and study of effective library change efforts across various library types remains a much-needed area of research.

7. **Ideas and tools for improving libraries as organizations usually originate from disciplines outside library and information science.** We concur with Joel Barker’s suggestion that anyone who wants to have a better idea of what is happening and what is about to happen needs to read widely in a number of sources one normally might consider exotic or tangential (Barker, 1993, pp. 213–218). While he developed this concept to help himself
and others anticipate coming and future paradigm shifts, Barker’s technique is equally useful for scanning the environment for other purposes. Libraries are not the only organizations on the planet, and most OD applications are first developed in corporations or other organizations. Our reference list documents the range of sources we find useful.

Organizational Development

The discipline of OD has evolved over the past fifty years or so. Both French & Bell (1999) and Grieves (2000) describe the historical development of the field. Broader perspectives on the nature of the discipline are contained in Carnevale (2003), French & Bell (1999), and Wheatley, Tannenbaum, Griffin, & Quade (2003). But what is OD? Perhaps the most comprehensive definition is the one provided by French and Bell, who describe OD as

a long-term effort, led and supported by top management, to improve an organization’s visioning, empowerment, learning, and problem-solving processes, through an ongoing, collaborative management of organization culture—with special emphasis on the culture of intact work teams and other team configurations—using the consultant-facilitator role and the theory and technology of applied behavioral science, including action research. (French & Bell, 1999, pp. 25–26)

The authors then devote several pages to explain the meaning of each part of the definition (French & Bell, pp. 26–29).

On a practical day-to-day level, we think of OD as an ongoing, thoughtfully planned effort by all members of an organization to improve how that organization operates, serves its stakeholders, fulfills its mission, and approaches its vision. What are more compelling than the definition of OD are the underlying and continuously evolving philosophy and values of the discipline.

Carnevale describes OD as

more than a set of techniques. The myriad interventions used by OD practitioners are essentially facilitative; they are process oriented. However, these procedures are expressions of a deep array of humanistic values and assumptions. The core attitude of Organizational Development supports the participation and development of people in organizations. The heart of OD is realizing human potential at work. Organizational Development is optimistic about what people can achieve and decidedly depends on high trust. (Carnevale, 2003, p. 113)

Core Concepts That Drive OD and Related Efforts

Relating to the values and assumptions of OD, Carnevale identifies eight core concepts (quoted below) that currently drive efforts to improve organizational effectiveness in the United States (Carnevale, pp. 15–16). All of these concepts relate to OD in one way or another, and most are evident in libraries.
1. “Customer or client satisfaction is the primary goal of the organization.” Libraries have a tradition of being client centered and client driven, and academic libraries are often known on campus for their dedication to serving users. Many of the assessment programs in academic research libraries relate directly to the user. (See, for example, Cook & Heath, 2001; Deiss, 2004; Hiller & Self, 2004.)

2. “There is a strong commitment to human capital development.” Libraries often have strong staff development programs and strive to implement sound human resources programs. Articles by Hawthorne (2004) and Oltmanns (2004) provide insight into such programs in libraries.

3. “Continuous improvement customarily borne of the ideas of various forms of work teams is a paramount system goal.” In many ways this relates to the concept of the learning organization (Senge, 1990), and several articles describe the ways both academic research libraries and public libraries are applying learning organization and team concepts. (See, for example, Bernfeld, 2004; Giesecke & McNeil, 2004; Phipps, 2004.)

4. “There is an enthusiastic pledge to employee involvement and participation in all kinds of forms.” Libraries are often among the first organizations to adopt newer concepts in leadership and management, which often include an emphasis on staff involvement in library decisions and planning.

5. “Common vision is prized.” Libraries often develop strategic plans, and one step in the process may be the development of a shared vision, either by broad staff participation or by other means designed to elicit staff concurrence with and support for a vision.

6. “Government organizations are encouraged to be entrepreneurial.” Many university libraries serve public institutions funded in part by state government, and there are several U.S. national libraries created and funded by the federal government. As governmental entities such libraries may be part of this movement.

7. “Organizational culture becomes the rage.” Libraries often have a unique culture, and surveys are sometimes used to characterize that culture. Kaarst-Brown, Nicholson, von Dran, and Stanton (2004) review the literature on organizational culture and relate research findings to library cultures.

8. “Empowerment.” Empowerment is, of course, one of the current buzzwords in management literature, and libraries continue to explore ways to empower their employees. Cynicism about the concept results from faulty application and likely misunderstanding about the dual-sided nature of empowerment. Empowered staff members are responsible and trusted with some degree of discretionary decision-making. In cases where organizational culture discourages “going beyond the job descrip-
tion," or where staff members do not feel safe to practice responsibility, *empowerment* is only an empty word.

These eight core concepts that Carnevale identifies are exemplary and naturally appeal to leaders, managers, and other employees of libraries. It is no wonder that in recent years an increasing number of academic research libraries have established positions that focus on OD (Holloway, 2004). The range of activities and programs in libraries that constitute an OD effort, or relate to such an effort, is staggering and subject to interpretation. OD includes almost everything we do in libraries that relates to how we treat employees, customers, and other stakeholders; how we develop and execute our plans; how we organize, learn, communicate, solve problems, and reach decisions; how we evaluate our programs, determine the need for change, and implement change; and how we consciously or unconsciously live our collective values and create effective organizational cultures. Actual OD-related programs in libraries may include diversity, staff development, human resources, customer service, outreach, assessment, and various other administrative and operational programs.

It is easy to see that OD is the glue that interconnects the organization as a whole and that OD efforts must take a holistic approach and recognize the library as an integrated system with a unique ecology all its own. And, of course, the library as a system (or combination of interconnected systems) must be viewed in the larger complex of organizations with which it interacts in various ways.

*Our OD Process Model*

In a nutshell, the basic application of OD in libraries or any organization is fairly straightforward. In its simplest form, the process can be described as a five-step OD process model:

1. **Create and foster a healthy organization.** Administrators, staff, and other stakeholders share in this responsibility. Much has been written on healthy organizations, ranging from the relatively early work of War-rick (1984, pp. 3–5) to a recent monograph that devotes seven articles to the topic of “New definitions of organizational health” (Hesselbein, Goldsmith, & Beckhard, 1997, pp. 315–374).

2. **Monitor the organization for evidence that some part(s) of the organization is/are not working well.** This is everyone’s responsibility in general terms, though administration needs to ensure that mechanisms are in place for monitoring systems and communicating observations of possible problems. OD surveys and other tools may be used to assess the status of the organization and to help diagnose areas that may need help (such as communication, interpersonal relations, clarity of job assignments, etc.). Some of the tools used are described in French and Bell (1999) and Cummings and Worley (2001).
3. **When an issue is identified and diagnosed, make a conscious decision whether to take action to correct the situation.** Roger Schwarz, in his thorough monograph on the topic of facilitation, has a similar step in his process for determining whether or not to intervene in a group process (Schwarz, 2002, pp. 166–169).

4. **If a decision to intervene is made, choose one or more appropriate actions and implement it/them.** “OD offers a number of methods to deal with an assortment of organizational problems. They can be applied in a pure fashion or worked as hybrids. Basically, they all affirm the worth of people” (Carnevale, 2003, p. 123). The organization as a whole must be considered when making changes, even if at first glance the problem only seems to affect one part of the organization.

5. **Evaluate the result(s) of the intervention to see if additional action may be needed.** Does the intervention produce the intended results? Are there any unintended consequences, particularly negative ones, which may exacerbate the problem or create other problems?

This cycle can serve as the backbone of the organization’s OD program and can be utilized with various systems within the library. Phipps (2004) provides an overview of how various systems within a library interrelate and are part of the larger whole.

**Organizational Development and the Nature of Libraries**

In many ways libraries are enlightened organizations and are natural test beds for the premises and tools of OD. In academia, for example, libraries are often campus leaders in planning, customer service, staff development, diversity programs, and the application of technology. Library employees in general are intelligent, collegial, well educated, well read, curious about a wide range of topics, proactive, and often eager to try out new approaches—and are willing to share the results of what they learn with others via conference presentations, articles, and informal discussion. They share a common set of values, which often includes a commitment to service and the provision of broad access to information for all customers. Members of the library staff are often naturally inclined to read scholarly literature and to contribute to that literature, and in many institutions faculty status for librarians further encourages such activity. Those who work in libraries have ready access to information and are usually expert at locating information resources. Further, at least in academic institutions, members of the library staff often know teaching and research faculty who contribute to the scholarly literature. Some of these scholars may be resident experts on OD, organizational behavior, change management, and other related subjects.

The library and information science profession benefits from strong professional associations that facilitate the sharing of organizational experi-
ences about what works and what does not work in the delivery of information to users, the leadership and management of libraries, the education of librarians and other library staff, the worldwide sharing of bibliographical resources, and the role of libraries in the overall scholarly communication process. Libraries have a long history of being catalysts for extensive levels of cooperation with other libraries and organizations, making the most of limited resources and often delivering unique information products and services to users. For example, Gardner, Gilbertson, Hutchinson, Lynch, McCue, and Paster (2002) describe a cooperative venture involving a national library and more than thirty universities and other organizations to produce a Web site of quality information on agriculture and related topics. Russell, Ames-Oliver, Fund, Proctor, and Vannaman (2003) summarize the results and benefits of an extended cooperative venture at one university between a library and a campus-wide professional development unit to enrich offerings that benefit not only the library but the whole campus.

In addition, many of us view libraries as relatively humane organizations in which to work. In highly functioning libraries, leaders, managers, and staff work constantly to improve organizational culture. There is a fairly broad awareness of much of the relevant literature and trends relating to human capital and the essential importance of all employees to the effectiveness of organizations.

These attributes of libraries can make it both logical and easy for libraries to apply OD tools and techniques in day-to-day operations as well as in special projects. With all these positive attributes, can libraries adapt more quickly to change, drive change, and anticipate paradigm shifts? How else can libraries capitalize on their strengths?

Organizational Development and Change

Change, as an organizationally significant activity, is well documented as necessary for libraries to remain relevant. In a March 2004 Library Literature keyword search combining the terms “change or change management,” more than 1,500 results were generated. Most of this literature is relatively focused and dedicated to specific library functions or desired organizational responses to certain environmental stimuli. Representative recent works include change in library acquisitions, information services, or technology deployment to meet narrowly defined change imperatives (Calhoun, 2003; Siddiqui, 2003; Wilson, 2003).

An area in need of further exploration is that of organizational transition itself—the responses to and leadership/management requirements of change in library organizations. Much has been written about general organizational change and the leadership requirements of change agents. Fundamental literature on this topic is plentiful (Bridges, 1991; Bolman & Deal, 1997; Cummings & Worley, 2001; Kotter, 1996; Kouzes & Posner, 1995; O’Toole, 1996; Schein, 1992; Senge, 1990). While highly relevant to
the general understanding of organizational change and the leadership characteristics necessary to achieve it, these writings are based largely on the cultures of corporate enterprises.

Library organizations, unlike those generally characterized in much organizational change literature, have a unique societal role and operate under cultures that may bear few similarities to their corporate counterparts. An increasing number of useful writings have emerged in the journal literature that treat the general issues of library change. Recent works offer the library context in the discussion of organizational change while remaining limited to specific outcomes or organizational areas (McKnight, 2002; Mosenkis, 2002). Library organizations need more adaptable models and meaningful case studies that clearly link leadership behaviors to organizational outcomes (Schwartz, 1997). How do these efforts begin? What are the landmines (dangers) and risks? There is no single, foolproof strategy for developing the library organization. Similarly, there is no single approach or tactic for leading organizations in libraries. More research is needed to model change processes, track the progress of major organizational change efforts in libraries, and document their effectiveness.

The Institutional Context for Library OD

One powerful and undeniable factor in determining organizational success (or frustration) is the institutional context in which libraries function. That context defines the relationships and obstacles libraries must navigate in order to accomplish their missions. Institutional realities (vision, priorities, resources, and politics) determine the amount of influence the library has in shaping broader outcomes and, thus, in maintaining relevancy. The library is owned by all of the institution, manifested as individual stakeholders with highly specific needs and perceptions. Yet libraries are not necessarily understood as complete organizations to be managed and developed outright and in concert with the institution.

Leaders and others in libraries who represent the organization within the institution encounter various situations indicating a disconnect between the library’s organizational self-understanding and the institution’s understanding about the library. The disconnect appears in various settings and circumstances, usually based on one (or more) of many possible uncertainties. What is the role of the library within institutions (academic and governmental)? What is the library’s alignment with institutional goals, expectations, culture, and priorities? What are the institutional culture and perceptions of the library’s credibility, autonomy, effectiveness, influence, and traditional relationships? How does the library stand in the competition for resources? These questions have seen only limited treatment in the library literature (Downing, 2003; Hawkins and Battin, 1998; Kirchner, 1999; McCabe & Person, 1995; Usherwood & Pearce, 2003).
Much more research is needed to identify and adopt effective strategies for solidifying the library’s role and influence within parent institutions. Similarly, more scholarly effort is needed to provide practical methods for use in assessing library contributions to institutional goals (for example, learning outcomes in the academic institution). If libraries are to design and redesign themselves with deliberateness and purpose, they must do so within the larger framework of complex and dynamic institutional environments.

Diagnosis of the Library Organization

Diagnosis should precede significant organizational change efforts. Library organizations (manifested as people) must be self-aware and educated with an understanding of the underlying cultures that shape them. They must learn why things are as they are, the way things are done, the unspoken (or misspoken) expectations, and the other informal systems that influence the people in the library. In this regard library research has yet to emerge.

The human dynamic of organizations and its impact on change is well documented in the management literature. Perception, fear, trust (or lack thereof), and other internal human factors may multiply in the organizational setting to create generalized reactions to the unfamiliar or to change that is inconsistent with the prevailing culture. Established, though not necessarily articulated, organizational customs, norms, and values also play an influential role in determining the character of the organization. These and other cultural factors inform how work is done, the expectations related to personal influence and autonomy, and (most importantly) what is perceived as important for the organization to do. Diagnosing and effectively engaging the existing culture is essential as a starting point in defining and guiding the organization’s future (Harrison, 1994; Kegan & Lahey, 2001; Weisbord, 1978).

Libraries, like other organizations, operate in ways largely influenced by their prevailing cultures. Within these cultures lie strong beliefs and values, some of which may exist in conflict with the formal and/or other informal expressions of what is organizationally important within a particular library. Kaarst-Brown and her colleagues describe the phenomena of competing values and the importance of identifying them in any organization (Kaarst-Brown, Nicholson, von Dran, & Stanton, 2004). The key to understanding fully the library’s values and other aspects of its culture is effective organizational diagnosis. More research is needed to identify and assess existing cultural assessment tools for application in library environments. This work should consider, in fact, whether the cultures of library organizations are substantially different from other not-for-profit service entities, thus requiring unique assessment tools and approaches. Such research would
enable libraries to understand and manage a myriad of issues. What are staff perceptions about the necessity for change? What is the organization’s readiness for change? What are the points of conflict? There will be winners and losers (no matter how positive or participatory the change process). Hard outcomes may simply be inevitable. How can the organization cope with this inevitability and protect important assets like good will and personal commitment? What are the ethical issues and responsibilities in undertaking an OD effort? How will we know if we succeed? What if we don’t? How do we effectively manage conflict? No significant change will occur without some degree of skepticism or deep, sincere disagreement about vision. In some environments, conflict arising from the work of organizational development—substantial change—is akin to competition for the soul of the library.

An important learning outcome from organizational diagnosis is the uncovering of psychological contracts. These are the unwritten (and often unspoken) understandings held by individuals about expectations, privilege, power, obligations, rewards, and the like. However, psychological contracts create powerful organizational mandates that may be inconsistent with the formally articulated mission and practices. Management and human relations literature provides considerable treatment of this issue (Anderson, 1996; Makin, Cooper & Cox, 1996; Rousseau, 1995; Turnley & Feldman, 1999). While not evident in the written mission and mandates (policies) that govern organizations, psychological contracts are perceived by many staff as no less binding. Violation of the psychological contract often occurs without the knowledge of the offender (usually those who are in authority) and can escalate to general distrust, skepticism, and rejection of efforts to develop the organization’s capabilities (Robinson, 1996).

All library staff, regardless of rank, face the challenges of organizational development—the continuous work of defining and designing their organizations. Leaders and other change agents must understand the psychological mandates that influence human organizational behaviors if real change and ongoing development is to occur.

**User Influence on the Development of Library Organizations**

Users are a fertile source of information about the breadth and quality of library offerings. Libraries have come to accept the centrality of user feedback in planning and assessing services. Efforts to quantify how much and how well libraries serve their users are well documented in the professional literature. Whether calculating the library inputs and outputs (transactions), or measuring the quality and outcomes of library services, useful resources abound to assist libraries in understanding their interactions with users (Cook & Heath, 2001; Friedlander, 2002). Some libraries have engaged users in the design of services. Advisory groups are another means of using feedback to inform planning and decision-making. Some efforts have centered on new technology-driven projects or other one-time
planning efforts (Pugnale, 1987). While critical, these approaches do not lend themselves to direct, active user involvement and influence in the planning and management of programs.

A more empathetic approach involves direct organization-user interaction in a partnership that gives users meaningful influence and investment in the outcomes. Empathetic approaches emerge from the perspective that empowered customers can engage organizations in uncovering and solving the problems they face in their relationship with the organization. These customers may provide powerful insight useful in designing the future of commercial and other enterprises (Lei & Greer, 2003). How, then, can users more directly influence the development of library organizations? Would this approach be effective, or even practical, in the library setting? Experimentation and research is needed to answer these questions.

**Organizational Development and Leadership**

Gill makes an excellent point about the relationship between change and leadership: “While change must be well managed—it must be planned, organized, directed and controlled—it also requires effective leadership to introduce change successfully. It is leadership that makes the difference” (Gill, 2003, p. 307).

But what is good leadership? There is so much written about leadership that it is difficult for anyone to know where to turn for useful information on the topic. Steven Sample, president of the University of Southern California, provides this assessment:

> The very concept of leadership is elusive and tricky. It’s hard to define in a way that is satisfactory to everyone, although most people believe they know it when they see it. Certainly there are natural leaders who seem to gravitate effortlessly to positions of power and authority. And yet many of the world’s greatest leaders demonstrated relatively little aptitude for leadership in their youth, but instead learned this esoteric art through study, apprenticeship and practice. (Sample, 2002, pp. 1–2)

Review articles by Storey (2004a) and Van Wart (2003) provide overviews of leadership and leadership development theory and practice and point out that there is relatively little consensus on some issues in the field. Differing perspectives persist, no matter how much is written. In our view, these diverse perspectives on leadership create a certain tension within libraries—a tension that creates conflict where instead it should create opportunities for healthy discourse and a diversity of approaches to leadership. In practical terms, however, we have observed that the diverse views of employees on what constitutes effective leadership may manifest themselves in how each employee would like to be treated and in the type of leader he/she would prefer. Employees who would just like to be told what to do may appreciate a supervisor who practices top-down, directive leadership. Other employees who expect to be involved in decisions affecting their work
may prefer a supervisor who practices aspects of facilitative, participatory, or shared leadership.

The broader literature on leadership is of some comfort in acknowledging that, despite all that is written on this popular topic, there are many, many unanswered questions. (See, for example, Hesselbein, Goldsmith, & Somervelle, 1999; Storey, 2004c; Yukl, 2002.) Occasionally an author or editor will focus on leadership in the public sector (see, for example, Javidan & Waldman, 2003; Van Wart, 2003; and Svara, 1994). Several authors write on leadership in library and information science, including Hernon, Powell, and Young (2001, 2002), Riggs (2001), and Winston (2001a). In addition, Winston recruited several authors to help compile a recent work on the topic (Winston, 2001b).

Needless to say, if it is difficult to define leadership, it is difficult to design programs for developing the leaders of the future. Murphy and Riggio (2003) assembled works by several authors on leadership development issues. Ready and Conger (2003) provide general insights into various factors that can undermine sincere efforts to develop leaders, and Sorcher and Brant (2002) address the issue of selecting future leaders. Within library and information science, Mason and Wetherbee (2004) review programs for developing leaders and raise important issues relevant to future improvement of those efforts. Winston (2001a) provides insights into the identification of future leaders in the profession.

But is much of this focus on selecting a subset of library employees to be developed further as leaders really necessary? A growing literature challenges many of the traditional views of leadership and has produced a variety of alternative leadership models. Many of the newer approaches focus on leadership development in all employees and on alternative styles of leadership that may include a whole repertoire of styles a leader may employ depending on circumstances. (See, for example, Badaracco, 2002; Block, 1993; Drath, 2001; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002; Lipman-Blumen, 1996; Moore, 2004; Pearce & Conger, 2003; Raelin, 2003; Ray, 1999; Sample, 2002; Schwarz, 2002; Seifter & Economy, 2001; and Svara, 1994.) In our view, this plethora of writings offering alternative approaches to leadership and leadership development suggests that libraries should broaden their efforts to embrace experiments in the use of these newer approaches to leadership.

Another observation we have is that in some cases the supervisors and managers who would benefit most from further development of their supervisory, managerial, and leadership skills may actively resist training and development. We find this peculiar, since the salaries earned by most supervisors and managers are larger than those of the employees they supervise and are justified at least in part by the supervisory, managerial, and leadership skills they are expected to provide. Thach and Heinselman make a related observation in their comparison of leadership development and parent development.
In general, our approach to leadership development has been similar to our haphazard approach to the development of parents. In our society, some parents pursue development and some do not; some parents do not want to be bothered with mastering good parenting skills, but still want to be parents (that is, leaders of children). For those of us who have been parents, there is unanimous agreement that good parenting involves the mastery of a particular set of skills needed in few, if any, other endeavors. (2000, pp. 219–220)

They go on to say, “In many organizations, leadership development follows a similar course, one that relegates leadership to a low priority position on the skill ladder. We approach leadership as if anyone can do it, as if the skills are acquired by osmosis” (2000, p. 220). Given this situation, we surmise that parents without special training will most likely parent the way their parents did (or possibly in an opposite way), and that leaders without special training may lead the way they have observed past bosses lead (or possibly in opposite ways, or a combination of ways). In both cases there must be much that can be learned about best practices (or even good practices) in parenting or leadership from discussion sessions, training, or observation and/or reading.

This reluctance by established managers to further their education on leadership topics is documented by Storey. He reports on a research study in Britain: “As expected, the vast majority of senior managers (78 per cent) espouse the value of leadership as a core organizational priority, but in practice they just do not seem to get round to doing much about it at the highest levels” (2004b, p. 7).

What does it take to motivate a change in leadership behavior? Stringer (2002) addresses this issue by presenting and analyzing a case study. He concludes that, in this case at least, five observations can be made:

• “Leaders won’t change unless they see the need for change.”
• “Collecting credible, objective, hard data helps leaders see the need for change.”
• “Leadership practices aren’t ‘good-bad’ issues; they are more a matter of ‘effective-less effective.’”
• “Leaders will change their practices when they feel they have real options.”
• “Leadership skills can be learned.” (Stringer 2002, pp. 112–117)

How can we help to ensure that all employees participate in leadership development and other training and development programs? Should the employment contract (written or verbal) specifically say that the employee will regularly refresh his or her knowledge of supervisory, management, and leadership knowledge?

Of course, there is also continuous pressure on those who design and present leadership development programs to update their offerings in response to participant feedback and the results of educational and leader-
Much has been written proposing ways to improve these programs, including works by Ayman, Adams, Fisher, and Hartman (2003); Mumford and Manley (2003); and Schriesheim (2003). During the 1990s several libraries began to offer leadership training programs developed by Stephen Covey to their staff (see, for example, Covey, 1989). Some of his programs offer a relatively new 360–degree feedback assessment as part of the leadership development process. This tool combines evaluations of the program participants by their supervisors, peers, and employees who report directly to them.

The use of such 360–degree feedback has become a standard part of many leadership development programs, and many researchers have investigated the effectiveness of such instruments. Do these assessment tools lead to improved leadership performance? Recent papers by Atwater, Brett, and Waldman (2003) and Conger and Toegel (2003) summarize much of that research and conclude that 360–degree feedback produces the intended improvements in some recipients but does not work for others. Occasionally there are unintended consequences, where valuable employees are discouraged by the process and/or results and choose to move on to another organization. Some of the recommendations to remedy this situation include paying more attention to how the raters of the participant are instructed in how to complete the assessment inventory and how the assessment results are presented to the participant.

This research result corroborates the experience at one library that mandated 360–degree feedback as part of a multiday leadership program. Administrators were somewhat surprised when a few excellent employees refused to participate if the training required such feedback. While it is evident this new assessment tool has many positive features, there are some drawbacks that can be addressed and refined. This is one example, relating to just one aspect of leadership development, where research results are valuable and can lead to further improvements in the ways we improve the skills of current and future leaders.

The Future of OD and the Future of OD in Libraries

The discipline of OD appears healthy, based at least on ongoing vigorous debate about both the premises and the future of the discipline. As one example, beginning in 1999 the Journal of Applied Behavioral Science provided space for debate on whether it was time for organizational development to evolve into a new discipline: change management (Worren, Ruddle, & Moore, 1999; Farias & Johnson, 2000; Worren, Ruddle, & Moore, 2000; Hornstein, 2001). Additional viewpoints on the future of OD are contained in Carnevale (2003); Church, Waclawski, and Berr (2002); and Wheatley, Tannenbaum, Griffin, and Quade (2003). Libraries have a natural role to play in the continued evolution of OD, particularly as environments in which both library staff and OD researchers can try new approaches,
evaluate results, and share experiences via conference presentations, the library/information science literature, and the OD literature.

Conclusion

Libraries exist to serve users in a fluid environment of evolving expectations, technological influences, and institutional imperatives. As organizations, libraries have always understood their unique role in society and in their parent institutions—always with the mission to serve regardless of the environment. The rapid pace of environmental change requires that libraries become more adept at forecasting the future and in redefining and redesigning themselves organizationally to meet new and sometimes daunting challenges. We do not have to start from the beginning; much relevant work has been done. Our challenge is to become more active in producing and sharing the research (and subsequent models) necessary to inform libraries as they adopt new and expanded roles in a dynamic real world.

In this article we have focused on OD, change, and leadership. The literature of all three of these fields reflects a state of flux and often includes conflicting points of view on such topics as how effective OD is, where that field is headed, what the most effective change model is, what the most effective leadership style is, and how leaders should be developed. What we can say about these fields is that they have a definite relationship to both current and future operations of libraries, and we cannot wait for all the dust to settle. We must choose what seems appropriate from existing research results and apply it in our libraries—and see what happens. In essence, we are recommending that we all pay attention to the literature of several disciplines, including our own; identify from that literature actions that may improve library operations and culture; try them out; and report our experiences, both positive and negative, within and beyond our community.

One of the authors recently visited Big Bend National Park in west Texas. As part of a field trip, one of the park rangers publicly commented “In many parks we encourage visitors to stay on the trails. In this park, we encourage visitors to get off the trails and really explore!” The authors encourage all stakeholders in the future of libraries to “get off the trails,” see what they can discover about improving library organizations, and share their discoveries broadly.

References


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