The Intentional Employer: Strategies for Entering and Integrating into a Community of Practice

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ACRL 2011, PRECONFERENCE
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
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9:00 am-12:00 pm
The Intentional Employer:
Strategies for Entering and Integrating into a Community of Practice

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Abstract: In this preconference, library administrators and supervisors will position their institution for the future by creating a plan to intentionally mentor, prepare and train new librarians. Recent survey results of LIS graduates and library administrators will inform the session. Attendees will develop a professional development portfolio that will contain a learning style and communication self-assessment, an individual and organizational plan, a personalized timeline for implementation and strategies for critical reflection as an intentional employer.
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**ACRL Preconference**  
The Intentional Employer:  
Strategies for Entering and Integrating into a Community of Practice

**Agenda**

<table>
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<tr>
<td>9:00-9:15</td>
<td>Welcome and introductions – Margaret</td>
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<td>9:15-9:30</td>
<td>Survey overview – Merinda</td>
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<td>9:30-9:50</td>
<td>Data analysis and visualizations – Eric</td>
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<td>9:50-10:30</td>
<td>Alumni themes and LCI Inventory – Margaret</td>
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<td>10:30-10:45</td>
<td>BREAK</td>
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<td>10:45-11:00</td>
<td>Director themes and mentoring – Merinda</td>
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<td>11:00-11:30</td>
<td>Developing a personal plan – Margaret &amp; Merinda</td>
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<td>11:30-11:45</td>
<td>Critical reflection strategies – Merinda</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:45-12:00</td>
<td>Wrapping it up &amp; time for questions – Margaret</td>
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Data Analysis and Visualizations for Two Surveys

ARL Directors

&

Recent LIS Graduates

ARL Directors Demographics

Managerial/Director Experience

ALA-Accredited Librarians
At Institution
Median Number of Librarians was 11-20

79% of respondents were from Bachelors degree granting institutions.
Alumni Demographics Continued…

Varied Job Descriptions

ARL Directors Analysis

Methodology

• Similar responses in most categories made analysis easy
• Qualitative data was more interesting
  – View aggregate data
  – Identify trends
  – Revisit individual responses
GSLIS Alumni Analysis

Methodology
- Identify divisive questions
- View results through their “lens”
- What differentiates alumni who agree and disagree with the statement?
- Ensure comparability (similar demographics)

“During the first year of employment, my employer provided me with the support necessary to navigate the culture of my institution.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sought Professional Development Outside Library</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member of Professional Organization</td>
<td>93.8%</td>
<td>82.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employer Pays for Memberships/Conferences</td>
<td>68.8%</td>
<td>68.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Has an assigned mentor</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
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Comparative Analysis

Methodology

- Three Likert Scale questions were in both surveys
- Look at alumni at larger institutions
- Statistical tests (Chi-Square)

On average, each library required about 4 and a half different types of orientation or training.
Please briefly describe the training your library currently provides to librarians at your institution during the first 12 months of employment...


The Disconnect

Directors: 59% have a formal mentoring program
Alumni: 12% have an assigned mentor
Themes from Survey of Graduate School of Library and Information Science (GSLIS) Alumni (2006-2010)

THEMES

1. Orientation is irrelevant provided there is sufficient training.
2. External professional development cannot induce a librarian to the institution’s culture.
3. Mentoring can have benefits, but is difficult to execute.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

In the survey we asked about professional development, tools and culture. Professional development and tools are easy to quantify. However, the ability to navigate culture is difficult and not clearly addressed in the literature.

1. What kind of advice and/or strategies would you suggest to a new librarian in order to successfully navigate your library’s culture?
2. In your library, how do you and a new librarian work collaboratively towards Personal Mastery?
Learning Connections Inventory

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The Learning Connections Inventory (LCI) is a statistically valid and reliable instrument that measures the degree to which a person uses four interactive patterns of learning and operation. The LCI reveals the level at which one seeks:

- **Sequence** — Order, planning & organization
- **Precision** — Accuracy, detail & information
- **Technical Processing** — Problem solving, relevance & autonomy
- **Confluence** — Ideas, uniqueness & expression

**WHAT/WHY?**

Learning Patterns

Each person owns a unique combination of naturally occurring Learning Patterns. These patterns are the foundation of how we internalize information and externalize our communication and operations.

**Pattern Awareness**

It is the awareness of learning patterns that starts the process of:

- Making connections with our own and others learning experiences
- Developing insights into strategizing, problem solving, and overcoming challenges
- Enhancing relations with family, colleagues, students and teachers

REDACTED: For more information about the Learning Connections Inventory, please visit: [http://www.lcrinfo.com/index.shtml](http://www.lcrinfo.com/index.shtml)

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REDACTED: For more information about the Learning Connections Inventory, please visit: http://www.lcrinfo.com/index.shtml
Learning Connections Inventory© Pattern Explanations

REDACTED: For more information about the Learning Connections Inventory, please visit: http://www.lcrinfo.com/index.shtml
LCI© Frequently asked questions

REDACTED: For more information about the Learning Connections Inventory, please visit: http://www.lcrinfo.com/index.shtml

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1. What is the theoretical base behind Learning Connections Resources (LCR)? The theoretical base behind Learning Connections Resources (LCR) is the Interactive Learning Model (Johnston, 1996) which illustrates the simultaneous interaction of the three fields of the mind…cognition, conation, and affectation. It is cognition (our thinking), conation (our doing), and affectation (our values) that work in concert to guide our individual patterns of learning.

2. What is the difference between the Learning Connections Inventory© and other assessments such as the Myers-Briggs, etc.? The LCI© is designed to measure the degree to which we use several mental processes or learning patterns, then use that knowledge to develop strategies and reflect upon our level of success in any endeavor. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is an instrument designed to evaluate behavior or personality. Based upon Jungian Psychology and observable behaviors, once completed the MBTI places individuals within a series of quadrants leaving their personality categorized but unable to see how they process information.

3. What is the difference between Learning Patterns and Learning Styles? Learning patterns are the natural foundation of how we interpret and understand the world around us. Each person's unique combination of learning patterns is where we begin our intentional and focused effort. Learning styles are based on the psychological construct of personality and are altered by such things as environment, task at hand, co-workers, and timing.

4. Is the Learning Connections Inventory a valid and reliable instrument? The Learning Connections Inventory© (LCI) was developed over a four year period using standard psychometric protocols culminating in factor analysis. Reliability was assessed via test-retest and internal consistency methods, validity through content, construct, and predictive methods. The seven versions of the instrument have been tailored and tested to meet the needs...

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Themes from Survey of ARL Directors/Deans

THEMES

1. There is never enough time to develop, coordinate, conduct and participate in training activities.
2. Ineffective models of mentorship lead to faltering programs.
3. Money is always an issue.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Qualitative data from both surveys indicates that formal mentoring programs struggle from both the point of view of the administration and the new librarian. Mentoring doesn’t have to be formal, in fact the literature suggests that the most successful mentoring relationships are informal agreements.

1. What strategies does/could your library employ to encourage power mentoring relationships?
2. What steps could your library take to support the experienced librarian in order to facilitate and encourage successful mentoring relationships?
ACRL’s Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education\(^3\) were developed to help educators in creating learning opportunities that support the process in which learners find, use and evaluate information. For our purposes, we have revised the language to reflect the professional development needs of the new (or incoming) librarian. When a librarian begins a new position, s/he a variety of information needs specific to that position, within the institution, and in the profession. In order for librarians to adjust to our evolving profession, they need to acquire skills and have access to timely and relevant professional development. This model is meant to provide the librarian and the administration with a framework with which to intentionally plan for short-term and long-term professional growth.

**ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education**

Information literacy forms the basis for lifelong learning. It is common to all disciplines, to all learning environments, and to all levels of education. It enables learners to master content and extend their investigations, become more self-directed, and assume greater control over their own learning.

An information literate individual is able to:

1. Determine the extent of information needed
2. Access the needed information effectively and efficiently
3. Evaluate information and its sources critically
4. Incorporate selected information into one’s knowledge base
5. Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
6. Understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally

\(^3\) [http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/standards/informationliteracycompetency.cfm](http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/standards/informationliteracycompetency.cfm)
From the new librarian point of view:

1. What kind of information do you need to navigate the culture of your library? Your day-to-day responsibilities? How will you succeed in the profession as a whole?

2. Where, how and from whom are you going to get the information you need to navigate culture and acquire the skills necessary to grow in your position and the profession?

3. What strategies are you going to use to weigh the advice you are given in order to make progress in your position and the profession?

4. How are you going to continue to question yourself/inquire/gather information and incorporate that information as you move from stage to stage in your career?

5. How are you going to demonstrate to yourself/employer/profession the benefits of these relationships? (e.g. reflection, present at conferences, leading a committee, teaching a class, mentoring a new librarian)

From the director point of view:

1. What kind of information does your new librarian need to navigate the culture of your library? Her/his day-to-day responsibilities? How can you assist that person in succeeding in the profession as a whole?

2. Where/how/from whom is the new librarian going to get the information needed to navigate culture and acquire the skills necessary to grow in within their position and the profession?
3. How can you assist the new librarian in developing strategies to weigh the advice they are given in order to succeed within their position and the profession?

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4. How are you going to continue assisting the new librarian in incorporating the information gathered as they move from stage to stage in their career?

________________________________________________________________________

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5. How will the new librarian demonstrate to their supervisor/your library/the profession the benefits of the relationships they have developed with your guidance? (e.g. reflection, present at conferences, leading a committee, teaching a class, mentoring a new librarian)

________________________________________________________________________

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Brainstorming

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Professional Development Portfolio

Learning style and communication self-assessment

I primarily use ______________________________ Learning Pattern(s)
(insert your LCI pattern(s) in which you scored between 25-35)

I avoid ______________________________ Learning Pattern(s)
(insert your LCI Pattern(s) in which you scored between 7-17)

Individual and organizational plan

1. Refer to the ACRL Model questions, “From the director point of view” (pg. 21).
2. Reflect on the following questions in relation to orientation/mentoring and professional development of new librarians in your organization:
   a. What do I want to accomplish this year?
   b. What do I want to accomplish in the next few years?
   c. What assets do I have in order to accomplish these goals?
   d. What obstacles are preventing these goals from being realized?
   e. What do I need from the Library or from the University in order to realize these goals?
   f. What do I need from my supervisor or from those I supervise in order to realize these goals?
   g. How will I use my understanding of my Learning Patterns to enable these goals?


Personalized timeline for implementation

To do when I return to work:

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To do in the next 3 – 6 months:

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To do by the end of 2011:

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Future to do:

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
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- Strategies for critical reflection as an intentional employer

Using Brookfield’s Four Critically Reflective Lenses (pg. 25) record the following information as you begin to implement your personal development plan:

1) Record the title(s) of articles or other pieces of literature you have read that provide a framework for thinking about your role as a mentor in your organization and the library profession. Why did this framework resonate with you?

2) Record a situation, a project, an encounter you had when you were mindful about the other person(s) learning patterns. What were your assumptions? How did you dispel or confirm your assumptions?

3) Reflect and record experiences you have had that have shaped you as a librarian and your sense of value to the profession. How have these contributed to your journey towards Personal Mastery?

4) After completing and/or making significant progress towards your personal development plan, ask a colleague and/or your supervisor to provide you with feedback on your librarianship. How will you approach this person?
Strategies for Critical Reflection as an Intentional Mindful Employer

Definition of critical reflection: "Reflection becomes critical when it has two distinct purposes. The first is to understand how considerations of power undergird, frame and distort educational processes and interactions. The second is to question assumptions and practices that seem to make our teaching lives easier but actually work against our own long-term best interests." (Brookfield, pg. 8)

How can critical reflection help us?

- Increases the probability that we will take informed actions, ones that can be explained and justified to ourselves as well as others
- Enables us to develop a rationale behind our practice which can be crucial to establishing credibility with one another and in the profession
- Helps in avoiding self-laceration behavior - believing that the administrator is to blame if librarians are not learning
- Grounds us emotionally in order to gain control over how we shape our learning, as opposed to leaving our work to chance
- Enlivens librarianship by making it challenging, interesting and stimulating for all
- Increases democratic trust as a result of the examples and modeling conveyed by the administrator, thereby allowing librarians to learn democratic behavior and a moral tone.

(Adapted from Brookfield, pg. 22-27)

Brookfield’s Four Critically Reflective Lenses

1. Frequently refer to the theoretical literature which may provide an alternative interpretive framework for a situation
2. Make an assessment of one’s self through the librarians’ lens by seeking their input and seeing learning from their perspectives
3. Create your own unique autobiography as a teacher and learner, using personal self-reflection and collecting insights and meanings for librarianship
4. Engage in peer review of your leadership from a colleague’s experiences, observations and feedback.

(Adapted from Brookfield, pg. 29-30)

The self is not something ready-made, but something in continuous formation through choice of action. ~John Dewey
Top Five Readings to Supplement Your Preconference


About the Presenters

Merinda Kaye Hensley, MS
Merinda is the Instructional Services Librarian and Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. As a part of the newly opened Scholarly Commons, she organizes the Savvy Researcher, a set of cross-disciplinary learning opportunities that aims to improve the advanced research and information management skills of graduate students and faculty. Her primary research interest focuses on examining the fifth ACRL Information Literacy Standard and its potential impact on the publication and dissemination process of undergraduate and graduate student research. Her personal mission is to bridge a gap in library school education by providing graduate students with myriad opportunities to examine the praxis of teaching in order to develop an identity as a teacher. Merinda received her M.S. from the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2006.

Margaret B. Edwards, MS
Margaret holds an M.S. in Library and Information Science from the Graduate School of Library and Information Science (GSLIS) from the University of Illinois. Her professional library experience includes that of a Reference and Instruction Librarian at an Art and Architecture Library and as the Learning Commons Coordinator at the Undergraduate Library at the University of Illinois. Currently, she is the Advising Coordinator for the Masters program at GSLIS where she advises over 600 students from a variety of academic and professional backgrounds, both in-person and online, in all areas of Library and Information Science. Margaret has also worked as a consultant to academic libraries in strategic planning processes, and to other library organizations in the areas of customer service and marketing. In addition, she teaches a course for the Graduate School of Library and Information Science entitled "Information Service Marketing".

Eric Phetteplace, MS candidate
Eric is an M.S. candidate at the University of Illinois with an anticipated graduation date of May, 2011. He grew up in the tiny, rural town of Lyme, New Hampshire near Dartmouth College. Moving across the country to attend Stanford University, Eric graduated with a Bachelor of Arts and Sciences in English and Mathematics. Reflecting this odd combination of studies, he spends much of his time writing poetry and performing statistical analysis. He hopes to work for an academic library and has a broad range of interests in librarianship, including reference, instruction, web design, and assessment.
## Appendix A - Participants

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<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Amy Beth</td>
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<td>7. Eveline Landa</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Karen Lequay</td>
<td><a href="mailto:karen.lequay@open.uwi.edu">karen.lequay@open.uwi.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Anna Matsuba</td>
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<td>10. Sara Seely</td>
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<td>11. Rachelle Shells</td>
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<td>12. Sherry Vellucci</td>
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<td>13. Frieda Wie</td>
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Appendix B - Bibliography


