
“Which Hat Are You Wearing Today?” Ethical Challenges in Dual Employment

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ABSTRACT

SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF LIBRARIANS today are taking on free-lance activities in addition to their employment, and information entrepreneurs struggling to develop their independent businesses often find it necessary to supplement their income with library employment. The part-time employee/part-time business person can face a variety of conflict-of-interest situations. This essay establishes a framework for personal decision making for individuals confronted with questions of conflict of interest, through the examination of codes of ethics pertinent to the information professions, organizational relationships, and sample institutional rules and guidelines.

INTRODUCTION

Substantial numbers of librarians today are taking on free-lance activities in addition to their employment, and information entrepreneurs struggling to develop their independent businesses often find it necessary to supplement their income with library employment. The part-time employee/part-time business person can face a variety of conflict of interest situations. What guidance is there for the individual facing these challenges?

This discussion focuses on the individual librarian who has participated in a professional program in a school of library and/or information studies, who is employed within a traditional library/information center, and who is simultaneously extending the work life beyond the walls of a particular library to some degree of self-employment in a field involving the provision of information or

the performance of information-related activities. Such activities may involve information brokering, document delivery, information analysis, indexing, writing, editing, publishing, consulting, training, or a combination of these or other activities. The outside pursuits are remunerated by payment to the individual or to an independent organization in which the librarian is the sole proprietor, a partner, or a principal of managerial/executive rank. It is assumed that the time and financial resources devoted to the outside activity are sufficient in quantity to qualify it as an activity of considerable importance to the individual librarian's current and/or future career. In other words, this article is about individuals who have two employers of equal value. It is concerned with the possibility of ethical conflicts between the two aspects of the individual's professional engagement when he or she is involved in similar activities within those two concerns. The discussion is directed to librarians who are in such a dual employment situation and to their employers.

GROWING NUMBERS OF ENTREPRENEURIAL LIBRARIANS

Professional organization statistics show that a number of librarians are interested in entrepreneurial activities, whether instead of or in addition to, traditional library employment. ILERT, the Independent Librarians' Exchange Round Table of the American Library Association (ALA), has grown to more than 225 members in the few years since its founding as a discussion group (American Library Association, 1988). According to its member brochure, ILERT includes the following groups among its constituency: free-lance librarians, information brokers, entrepreneur librarians, library association staff, indexers/abstractors, consultants, information managers, records managers, storytellers, vendors, publishers, trainers, database managers, and information systems analysts. Its members may be engaged in these activities full-time or part-time, but they uniformly consider themselves in some regard involved in the library profession, as their membership in ILERT presupposes membership in ALA.

The Special Libraries Association has a Consultants Section of 821 members within its Library Management Division (Special Libraries Association, 1989, p. 5). A large number of those members list their current membership mailing address at a corporate or academic library.

The Association of Independent Information Professionals (AIIP), founded in 1987, has 150 members, 80 percent of whom acknowledge librarianship as part of their professional preparation (Association of Independent Information Professionals, 1989). Many

AIIP members include libraries and/or librarians among their current client base, and some define their services to include "library support."

ETHICAL CONFLICTS?

Are there ethical challenges for those individuals who combine, in various degrees and ways, traditional employment and independent entrepreneurial activities? Consider the following scenarios:

- Nancy and Patricia have worked for eight years to institute and develop a fee-based information service for industrial clients as a joint project between the library and school of business within the university. Although the service is successful in attracting clients, a general financial retrenchment cuts the personnel budget from 2 to 1.5 FTE. Patricia, whose hours were reduced, cannot continue to serve the same number of clients within her shortened work time as she once did. However, the clients keep on coming. Why not set up an independent business on her own at home with the purpose of serving those clients who would otherwise now be turned away?
- As an independent contractor, Owen is nearing the end of a year-long project—the writing of a technical manual. The word processing software on which the manual was developed was made available by the company with whom Owen contracted for the duration of the project. Now Owen, in his capacity as librarian, is getting ready to take on a big writing assignment within his library. He wants to use the software which, by now, he knows as well as the back of his hand, but it takes three months to get a purchase request through the library bureaucracy. Should he "borrow" a copy until the library copy comes through?
- As consultant to a publisher, Joan has been asked to attend a national conference and take a turn in the publisher's booth in the exhibit hall. She would normally be attending the same conference as part of her library employment. Neither her library employer nor her publisher will reimburse the total costs of registration, travel, meals, and lodging for the conference, but through thoughtful maneuvering, Joan has managed to coordinate a system that should satisfy her library, her publisher, her conscience, and the IRS. What affiliation should she list on her registration badge?

Clearly, the environments in which these individuals work, and the variety of situations to which they are exposed, do not allow for easy solutions to their ethical dilemmas. Indeed, since ethics goes beyond the rules and legalities of any given environment, what is a problem for one individual may not be so for another. But regardless

of the environment, there exists the potential for problems when a library employee is also a business owner.

Horner (1984) has described the situation of straddling the two worlds of children's librarian and free-lance storyteller and pinpointed the essential issue involved. "It is very important for the free lancer to maintain a clear boundary between the institutional job and the independent business" (p. 285). She speaks of potential problems in combining her independent storytelling with her work in a public library in terms of fatigue, scheduling, public misconceptions of services and charges, and staff reactions to her high visibility.

In discussions with librarians who combine employment with free-lance or other independent information work, and in reflection on this author's personal situation during the past five years, it was found that the issues described by Horner are common to many situations of dual professional interest, regardless of where the librarian is employed and which activities are the focus of his or her independent and library interest. Problems associated with the situation of "dual loyalty" most frequently are characterized by an inability to maintain strict boundaries between the two pursuits. Independent business people usually have learned to keep good track of their time and business expenditures for the purpose of charging back to individual clients and therefore should be able to make equal distinctions between their employment environment and their business operation. But is the movement from the employment day to the business day as simple as removing one hat and replacing it with another? Even if the individual is conscientious about separating the aspects of his or her work, the demands of good service, the advantages of modern office technology, the flexibility of current work schedules, and human nature can all conspire to keep those hats in perpetual motion.

- If an individual puts extra hours into a rush job for the independent business, how much energy is left for the hours required by that individual as a staff member? If he stays late at the library to cover the reference desk during a staff illness, what happens to the three hours of independent work he was planning to do that night?
- What happens when an outside client telephones the independent at the library—even after a request has been made to delay those calls to an appropriate time? Is it fair to call a client from the library if the call is charged to the business?
- Is it inappropriate to consult a business reference directory in the library's collection for an independent client while doing reference desk duty for the library?
- Of course it is wrong to steal supplies from an employer to supply

one's own business, but sometimes pencils or paper clips inadvertently end up in the wrong desk; does this extend to computer disks, ribbons, or paper? Does one desk benefit more than the other?

- Is it wrong to check business electronic mail after hours at the employer's location, since the business password will be used?
- Should one make phone calls to committee members in professional associations from the employer's or the business phone?

These situations illustrate examples of mingling business and library time and resources, both physical and mental. But some of the toughest problems occur when there is the potential for stealing clients or mixing services, or when the business client fails to distinguish between the employee's organization and the independent's organization.

- If an information broker works in a fee-based library unit which serves internal and external clients at differential rates and he performs a search at work for his own client, should he pay the library's internal or external rates?
- How hard will an independent storyteller push her library employer to expand its storytelling service beyond children to adults if she derives much of her independent business from the adult market?
- Does the mention of a current library affiliation in the independent's sales brochure create inappropriate expectations on the part of potential clients? How is this different from listing past affiliations on a resume?

The purpose of this essay is not to list a multitude of instances in which there could be a possible conflict of interest. There are far too many situations to discuss in one setting, although many have been mentioned elsewhere (Dragich, 1989; Hauptman, 1988; Mintz, 1985; Stevens, 1986). Nor is it to posit definitive answers to what is right or wrong in a particular situation. It is rare that a single answer will satisfy all circumstances.

This is an age of shifting societal expectations and conflicting values. Individual actions, when confronted with questions akin to those cited earlier, will inevitably be influenced by a person's own ethical framework and the pragmatics of the situation. This discussion attempts to answer the question "When an individual faces an ethical challenge, where can he or she look for assistance in analyzing that challenge?" It describes three areas that can provide direction in formulating a personal framework for ethical decision making in the situation of dual professional loyalties: (1) professional codes of

ethics; (2) the organizational environment; and (3) institutional rules and guidelines.

PROFESSIONAL CODES OF ETHICS

The establishment of a code of ethics is one of the characteristics normally identified with the qualification of an occupation as a profession (Carey, 1966). Thus, professional societies may adopt codes of ethics for their members in order to legitimize their claims as professions. Codes of ethics serve other purposes as well. Frankel (1989, pp. 111-12) has described eight functions of professional codes: (1) they serve as enabling documents, pointing the direction for professionals to take when they encounter novel problems in their practice; (2) they serve as a source of public evaluation, letting the public know what they can expect from members of the profession; (3) they perform professional socialization by helping to foster member pride in the profession and strengthening professional identity; (4) they can enhance the profession's reputation and public trust; (5) they may preserve entrenched professional biases; (6) they may function as a deterrent to unethical behavior by providing for sanctions and/or by requiring professionals to report unethical behavior of colleagues; (7) they may provide a support system to bolster the profession against unreasonable demands on its skills by outsiders; and (8) they may serve as a forum for adjudication of disputes among members or between members and outsiders.

For whatever purposes a code is drafted, its adoption by a professional society signifies to society at large its most significant values. Frankel goes on to identify three types of codes: aspirational, educational, and regulatory.

An aspirational code states ideals which professionals should use to guide their practice. An educational code provides extensive commentary and interpretation to demonstrate how its provisions can be helpful in deciding ethical issues in practice. A regulatory code includes detailed rules to govern conduct and attempts to enforce those rules through monitoring and sanctions.

None of the codes included in the following discussion are regulatory in nature. To some degree, they each touch on educational issues, but, for the most part, they are aspirational codes. As such, they espouse ideals for behavior in the professional groups for which they are written and are open to interpretation by individual practitioners in relation to specific situations. Since the fundamental situation under examination crosses over the boundary of a single professional group, it obviously becomes incumbent upon the information professional operating as both a librarian and an

independent to consider the aspirational goals of both professional groups.

The ALA Code

As a librarian, one might look at the Statement of Professional Ethics reprinted on the back of the American Library Association membership card (American Library Association, 1982, p. 595). The final provision within a code which otherwise espouses justifiably high minded ideals of quality of service, resistance to censorship, protection of the rights of privacy, and adherence to principles of due process and equality of opportunity speaks rather prohibitively, however, to the scenarios mentioned earlier in this discussion. "Librarians must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues, or the employing institution."

There are, perhaps, those who would take a narrow look at the above statement and conclude that any situation in which a librarian expected financial reimbursement outside of regular employment would be one to be avoided, and, that therefore, librarians ought not to be in business for themselves, or at least not if they are simultaneously employees of libraries. Those in business for themselves, however, commonly report that they perform information services beyond and outside of those generally offered by libraries, which must tailor their service offerings to what their funding agency is willing and able to pay. These individuals, then, are not gaining financial benefits at the expense of general library users; they are serving people who the library cannot satisfy under its current budget and charging directly for that service. As such, they may foreshadow a growing demand for a particular service.

Adopted in 1981, the statement in the ALA code does not explicitly recognize the growing employment of librarians in alternative environments and consequently may be narrowly interpreted. The most distressing implication in the code statement is the admonishment to *avoid* difficult situations; certainly what is wanted is *responsible* and *ethical management* of such situations.

An aid in the development of responsible and ethical management of such conflict situations is given in Section V of the code: "Librarians must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of an institution or professional body" (American Library Association, 1982, p. 595). This statement, if carried beyond the intended purpose of drawing a visible line between personal and institutional philosophies and attitudes, to the drawing of a visible line between actions undertaken as an employee and actions undertaken in an independent professional

capacity, can serve as a positive guideline for those in dual employment.

AIIP Code of Ethics

Members of the Association of Independent Information Professionals adopted a code of ethical business practice in 1989 at their third national conference and annual meeting. It is reprinted here in its entirety:

An independent information professional is an information entrepreneur who has demonstrated continuing expertise in the art of finding and organizing information. The independent information professional is unaffiliated with any institution, and provides information services to more than one client. Information professionals serve as objective intermediaries between the client and the information world.

They bear the following responsibilities:

1. To uphold the profession's reputation for honesty, competence, and confidentiality.
2. To give clients the most current and accurate information possible.
3. To help a client understand the sources of information used, and the degree of reliability which can be expected of them.
4. To accept only those projects which are legal and are not detrimental to our profession.
5. To respect client confidentiality.
6. To honor intellectual property rights, and to explain to clients what their obligations may be.
7. To maintain a professional relationship with libraries, and comply with all their rules of access.
8. To assume responsibility for employees' compliance with this code.

This code reflects the engagement of association members in for-profit information enterprises and speaks to the majority of members who focus their businesses on providing research services to several clients. It should be noted that the code was written by a young organization which is striving to interpret a new profession to the public. It is difficult to write and agree on a code when an organization is composed of members from a variety of backgrounds (Shaver, 1988, pp. 103, 106). Nevertheless, a preponderance of members, but by no means all, have been employed at one time or another within libraries. Several provisions (2, 3, 5, and 6) formulate and state ethical principles that are markedly similar to the aspirations of reference librarians while provision 7 explicitly acknowledges links to libraries.

The code attempts to explain the multiple client base of independent information professionals. "The independent information professional is unaffiliated with any institution, and provides information services to more than one client." In the opinion of this writer, a more apt wording would be: "The independent information professional is not affiliated with any single institution

and provides information services to multiple clients." Affiliation can take various forms; what is being said here is that the independent information professional accepts sole responsibility for her professional information service activities rather than sharing that responsibility with an employing institution.

The practice of serving multiple clients as independent information professionals can serve as a model for action in some dual employment situations. This code specifically mentions confidentiality as a characteristic that needs to be maintained in the multiple-client environment. The requirement of honesty is treated generally, but the concept of honesty, in a multiple-client environment, may have some very specific applications. Consider the scenario involving sharing of software mentioned earlier; the temptation to share software among several clients—library or otherwise—abounds in the multiple-client environment due to the heavy investment of individual time in learning to use complex software tools productively.

Code of the American Society for Information Science

The ASIS Code of Ethics for Information Professionals, under development during the period in which this article was being written (Barnes, personal communication, October 31, 1989) looks at the problem of information professionals engaged in a variety of activities and offers a framework for individuals to reflect on their ethical responsibilities in whatever capacity they are serving within the information profession. The American Society for Information Science recognizes the broad base of the "information profession." Its members share professional orientations with librarians, engineers, and researchers, among others, across employment areas in government, the commercial arena, and academia. The framework proposed, delineates four areas of responsibility: to individual persons, to the sponsor, to society, and to the profession. It is the notion of responsibility to the sponsor that provides help to the entrepreneurial librarian operating in a multiclient environment:

The contribution of the information professional is most often made through the offices of a sponsor—i.e., a client or employer. As such, the sponsor acquires certain special information rights, which there is an obligation to respect.

- Information professionals should maintain confidentiality of information belonging to the sponsor and should strictly observe nondisclosure agreements.
- Information professionals should avoid conflict of interest situations involving multiple sponsors.

- Information professionals should refuse assignments or contracts of a questionable nature and should inform sponsors of the objectionable nature of such an assignment or contract.
- Information professionals should, within the limits of their other obligations, strive to serve the sponsor's interests faithfully.

This code specifically acknowledges conflict of interest as a problem with multiple sponsors, and it particularly notes that a sponsor may be an employer or a client. However, its admonition to "avoid conflict of interest situations involving multiple sponsors" does not prohibit or advise against the situation of having multiple sponsors. Such a prohibition would be out of character considering the funding patterns of academic research in which many ASIS members are engaged. Rather, it uses the preamble to alert the information professional to the possibility of conflict of interest in those situations and urges the individual to attend to that possibility.

Moreover, the ASIS code absolutely denies any intent to be a regulatory code with sanctions against those who violate its provisions. By implication, it places its environment in Frankel's (1989) aspirational and educational spheres and explicitly sets as its purpose "to articulate the distinctive goals and ideals of the information profession, to guide the activities of its members, and to direct their thoughts into reflection on the ethical aspects of the profession" (Barnes, personal communication, October 31, 1989).

The double-hatted individual, involved in information activities in both the independent and employment arenas, may look to the foregoing codes of professional conduct as illustrative of the values prevalent from varying viewpoints within the information profession. That individual may further reflect on the ideals aspired to in the code statements and develop a framework from which to consider personal challenges within the specific situation in which he or she operates.

ORGANIZATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

In addition to considering the ethical aspirations espoused by librarians and by independent information professionals in their codes of ethics, individuals who share a professional life across two spheres should look toward the cultural environment within which their organizations operate—both the institutions in which they are employed and the organization by means of which they perform their independent activities. The potential conflict seems to be greatest when the independent organization provides the same type of service in which the principal is engaged in his library job. An example of this situation is the business of providing direct research services. An employed reference librarian also operates an information

brokerage outside of the library. The commonality between these two environments is that a single person is providing information service to distinct clients in exchange for some form of remuneration. It may be helpful to consider who is the employer of the service provider, who is the client, and who pays for the service.

Gray (1988) has delineated the position of information intermediaries in three types of organizations for the purposes of examining personal liability in information distribution. His discussion focuses on "those who assist users in identifying and accessing reliable sources of information for the users' own purposes or who themselves identify and access reliable sources on behalf of others and communicate the results to them" (p. 72). He distinguishes "at least three categories of 'information intermediaries': reference librarians, special librarians, and free-lance, independent, information brokers/specialists/researchers" (p. 72).

Gray's *reference librarian* is employed by an institution such as a public library, academic institution, government agency, or other such facility. The client of the reference librarian is the public or eligible users determined by the employer; the "client" receives the service at no cost (pp. 72-73). The cost of the service is paid by the employing institution.

Special librarians, according to Gray, are employed by organizations as "in-house librarians." The organization's employees are the "clients" and the employer pays for the service (pp. 72-73). Thus, in both the reference and special librarian environments, there is a marked separation between the agency paying for the service and the user receiving the service. Although the interactions of the service provider with various service receivers are probably individual, personal, and frequent, interactions with the funding agency may well be as infrequent and impersonal as a monthly direct-deposit paycheck.

Gray's *information broker* is a self-employed independent contractor whose clients are self-selecting and who pay directly for the service for which they contract. "The information broker is an independent contractor who does for a fee for his or her client what the special librarian does for pay and fringe benefits for his or her employer, while there is no exchange of consideration between the reference librarian and the patron. Although all three professionals provide...the same...services...the relationship to their respective users is different....The distinction is crucial because the *nature of the relationship* determines the *legal* result regarding personal liability" [emphasis added] (p. 73). The nature of the relationship may also be presumed to influence the ethical responsibilities of reference

librarian/special librarian/information broker even beyond the specific situation of liability. Surely the librarian/information entrepreneur has responsibilities to his respective users, in both capacities, and to his respective employers, including himself as business owner.

Although helpful in clarifying the relationships of individual information providers, their clients, and their employers in traditional library and information broker environments, Gray's definitions do not explicitly take into consideration fee-based information services within special, academic, and public library settings. He goes on, however, to acknowledge the change in relationships created when academic and public libraries establish policies allowing them to "provide specialized information services to specialized users on a contract basis for a fee" (p. 80).

Warner (1989) has examined the issue of libraries charging fees for service and reports that special libraries charge fees in three ways: (1) charging back internally within the organization, (2) charging out to customers who are already clients of the parent organization, and (3) selling information services and products directly to not otherwise affiliated customers (p. 275). Presumably the first charge model classifies the librarian service provider within Gray's *special librarian* category, with the consequent separation of service funder and service receiver. The third model classifies the *organization* (but not the librarian) in the *information broker* category, with the service provider being an employee of the information broker/special library.

The second charge model, according to Warner, is "occurring increasingly in virtually all kinds of special libraries" and she names law firms; advertising agencies; research and development labs; medical centers; planning agencies; engineering design, and accounting firms as participating in the practice (p. 276). The second charge model—information fees charged out to the firm's clients by the library/information center—may easily lead to alterations in the employer/client/service provider relationship by promoting direct contact between the client and service provider, with the possibility of removing the employer to an even more remote location.

Gray categorized reference librarians, special librarians, and information brokers for the purpose of disputing the notion that "the person who provides the information is liable for harm caused by it" (p. 71) in the consideration of malpractice liability, and, among other conclusions, he determined that the individual reference librarian or special librarian could not be held legally liable for malpractice. This author concurs with his analysis but suggests that when the legal framework is broadened to an ethical framework, the matter of relationships among the various parties and the

consequences of those relationships becomes more difficult. When a distant relationship prevails between the service funder and the service provider, while a close relationship prevails between service provider and clients, the possibility of client poaching from library to independent organization can be tempting for the service provider *and for the client*, who reasonably may envision direct service from the independent competitor as faster, cheaper, more flexible, and equal in quality to the service provided through the library. Should the funder/provider relationship turn negative for any reason, severe tests of that delicate balance may be expected.

Maintaining a distinct separation between the type of service provided in the employment situation and that provided in the business position can be expected to minimize the likelihood of conflicts of interest. When a strict separation cannot be maintained, however, it may be helpful to review the structure of the relationships and consequent responsibilities among funder, provider, and client in the two organizational environments in which the service provider operates.

INSTITUTIONAL RULES AND GUIDELINES

Increasing national sensitivity to problems of conflict of interest and ethics in business and government have prompted some institutions to address the issue with statements of policy and/or rules. Employees of such institutions must be cognizant of the policies so stated, for those statements may carry the force of regulation. Examination of such policies even by unaffected individuals, however, can be helpful in delineating issues and suggesting actions for dealing with ethical problems.

The MIT Personnel Policy Manual (1989) includes the following statement in its Policy on Conflict of Interest:

It is the policy of the Institute that its officers, faculty, staff, and others acting on its behalf have the obligation to avoid ethical, legal, financial, or other conflicts of interest and to ensure that their activities and interests do not conflict with their obligations to the Institute or its welfare. Essential to effective administration and adherence to this policy are: a) disclosure to designated Institute officers of outside activities and interests, including financial interests, which might give rise to conflicts, and b) ready availability of advice and consultation to individuals and to Institute Department Heads on any situation. (Section 3.5, p. 1)

Accordingly, staff within the organization are asked each May, in a one-page form, to summarize their outside professional activities and interests by listing activities in which they have engaged throughout the previous year, whether compensated or not, in consulting, teaching, board memberships, professional society committees, and the like. Specific information called for includes name of company or organization, nature of the work relationship,

number of days engaged per year, and a statement of whether compensation was paid (but not how much). In addition, staff are asked to disclose any company or organization in which they have substantial financial interest or managerial responsibility, and any full- or part-time appointments held outside the institute. Finally, there is space to answer the question: "Considering the Institute policy on conflict of interest, in your view, have any of the relationships reported above the potential or appearance of a conflict of interest? If so, please describe." The forms are reviewed annually by the appropriate department head.

This administrative procedure is good for several reasons. First, it requires the employee to review activities on a periodic basis. An annual review encourages comparison with activities listed on the prior annual form and makes it easy for the employee to spot new directions or increases in activity that may not be noticed as they actually occur. Thus, it promotes an annual employee assessment of time spent in outside activity, types of activity, and compensation received from outside interests (although the amount is not disclosed)—all in light of their possible effect on the employing institution.

Second, the annual review relieves the administration of the responsibility of approving every instance of outside involvement on a case by case basis throughout the year. This procedure would be needlessly time consuming and diverting.

Third, the procedure is affirmative rather than prohibitive. The form does not specify types of actions that are not permitted and the report is requested only after an activity is completed or at least begun. Thus, the procedure in and of itself does not inhibit outside professional activity.

Fourth, the procedure assumes the responsibility of the professional employee in making judgments regarding the conflict potential of a specific activity. The honesty and integrity of the individual is presumed, and no penalties are threatened.

Fifth, it is allowed that the *appearance* of a conflict may exist without there actually being a conflict. There is the opportunity to explain an apparent conflict, advising the employee and the department head of the situation in the event of a question.

Sixth, fiscal privacy is preserved. There is no need to reveal on the form the amount or type of compensation received in a transaction.

Finally, the review by the department head keeps the nature and extent of outside professional relationships a matter between employee and ultimate supervisor. While encouraging confidentiality, the procedure also encourages consultation between those two

individuals on questionable matters. Such consultation can go a long way in preventing irresolvable conflicts from developing.

Supplemental to the annual review of outside activities is a system of established resources to give advice and consultation to individuals seeking an opinion at the time actions are questioned. This review policy begins but need not end with the department head. The policy statement acknowledges that "there are situations sufficiently complex that judgments may differ as to whether there is or may be a conflict of interest" and therefore suggests an appeal policy should a subordinate differ with a supervisor on a potential activity. The specification of this part of the policy encourages consultation before the fact and therefore may minimize the occurrence of problem areas on the annual form.

The MIT Personnel Policy Manual specifically addresses the problem that can occur when an opinion is expressed by individuals in their outside affiliation capacity that is mistakenly inferred as an official statement or endorsement by the institute. The manual warns against the use of institute stationery in these instances as a safeguard against the wrong interpretation and additionally advises the use of an office address without corporate name in personal professional correspondence. In addition to discussing situations in which unintentional misrepresentation might occur, the policy admonishes that "the Institute should not allow its name to be associated with business enterprises, when the obvious intent is to provide undue prestige to the business" and mandates that "all proposals for the use of the name of M.I.T. in advertising and commercial publicity...be submitted to the Director of the News Office" (Section 3.9.3).

Obviously, awareness of an employing institution's rules and policies on conflict of interest is of prime importance to any employee. An employee actively engaged in extramural business activities is advised to seek out applicable policies in advance of any problem. Not all institutions will have policies that are as permissive as the one examined earlier; some institutions may not have policies at all. When none exists, it is advisable to observe actual practice and determine any general applicability to the particular situation.

CONCLUSION

It is inappropriate to generalize about libraries' attitudes toward the employment of professionals who also provide information services independently outside the institution. In reading and inquiring about this issue for the purpose of this discussion, this author encountered institutions that seemed blissfully unaware of any possible conflict of interest, even though they had employees

so engaged. Individuals were also encountered who assumed that an employee with loyalty to an outside business interest could not possibly honor traditional library ethics and consequently would not hire someone in that capacity.

Libraries that are not fearful or contemptuous of employing independent information professionals stand to gain good value for their personnel investment. Independent practitioners can bring experience and insights from their outside activities back to the library at no expense to the employer. Professional development opportunities pursued for the outside concern can frequently have positive spillover value. Independents circulate in a broader environment when they are outside the library and, to the extent that their library affiliation is acknowledged, they can act as a positive marketing agent for the library (Horner, 1984, pp. 289-90).

The first safeguard against conflict of interest between the two responsibilities is for both the entrepreneurial library employee and the employing library to recognize the possibility of conflict. The next step is for both parties to affirm a positive attitude toward potential conflict situations. The employee has the responsibility to be aware of circumstances that present a potential or appearance of conflict and to bear the demands of business life in such a way as to minimize their impact on the employer. The employer needs to make clear its expectations regarding the impact of its employee's outside activities. Both employer and employee need to keep channels of communication open for discussion of possible conflict issues on a regular and as needed basis.

It is the librarian, though, who bears the major responsibility in managing conflict of interest between dual professional commitments. The librarian is the only party who has detailed knowledge of the service goals and clientele served by both the independent business and the library. The librarian must develop a work schedule and style that maintains a separation between the two venues of activity. Normally the librarian will be the first to suspect a potential conflict as it occurs. Clear-cut solutions will seldom present themselves. The following self-dialogue may be helpful in finding an ethical course of action in specific situations when negotiating between multiple clients and two employers:

Who is sponsoring this work?

Who is benefiting from it?

Could any of my affiliations be damaged by this practice? How?

If I did this, would I be guilty of mismanaging the time, resources, or other assets of one client for the benefit of another?

Would I be embarrassed to see this described in the headlines of the *Wall Street Journal*? *Library Hotline*? (McGonagle paraphrased in Berkman [1989]).

If there is still doubt, share the decision making with your affiliations.

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