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## Professional Associations: Promoting Leadership in a Career

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### ABSTRACT

LEADERSHIP WITHIN THE LIBRARY COMMUNITY is vitally important in the wake of continual technological developments, recurrent budgetary shortfalls, and the fluidity of the job market for library professionals. Libraries must identify and foster the inherent personal characteristics and skills considered most relevant for leadership in the field of information management. Professional library associations play an important role in teaching and developing skills by providing experiential opportunities for their membership. Career models for academic or research librarians are discussed along with an assessment of career management.

### INTRODUCTION

"Leadership, much as we admire it in the abstract, is something we suspect in the specific" (White, 1987, p. 68). This article examines the role of the major American professional associations and organizations in developing leadership among professionals in academic and research libraries. The associations under discussion include the American Library Association (ALA), Special Libraries Association (SLA), Medical Library Association (MLA), Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), Council on Library Resources (CLR), Association of Research Libraries (ARL), and the Research Libraries Group (RLG).

The literature and mission statements of these associations offer some clues as to their roles. The ALA attempts to "promote and improve li-

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brary service"; ARL, which is restricted to institutional memberships, works "to initiate and develop plans for strengthening research library resources and services in support of higher education and research"; and CLR, a private foundation established in 1956, focuses on solving library problems, particularly those of academic and research libraries, via grants and contracts and educational services (McChesney, 1984). MLA (Medical Library Association, 1996) fosters excellence in leadership and professional achievement in health sciences librarianship. And the SLA (Special Libraries Association, 1996) vision is to be known as the leading organization in the information industry.

### LEADERSHIP IN LIBRARIES

Leadership became an increasingly prominent topic in library literature during the 1980s. Previously, the topic had been covered in occasional articles dealing with the importance of leadership in general, the qualities of leadership, the dearth of sound leadership, and gender differences related to leadership. Searching *Library Literature* for 1975-1981, Riggs and Sabine (1988) found fewer than five entries containing the words "leader" or "leadership." "For some reason, persons holding responsible positions in libraries have done little to articulate the importance of leadership" (p. 190). The importance of leadership became recognized so acutely that a *Library Journal* editorial lamented the scarcity of leaders in the profession (White, 1987, p. 68). The 1987-88 ALA conference was the first to emphasize leadership in the 112-year history of the organization:

Speculations about why the topic had achieved such national prominence centered on the perceived crisis in the production of political leaders and the greater emphasis on accountability. Similar fears about the production of library leaders, as well as the changing library environment, and uncertainties about the future of librarianship were offered as reasons for the increased attention to the topic in the library field. (Gertzog, 1989, pp. 2-3)

*Libraries in the 90's* (Riggs & Sabine, 1988) is a compilation of interviews with library leaders at the 1988 ALA Midwinter Conference. Participants addressed the rapid changes that libraries have faced during the last twenty-five years and the need for a comparably rapid response by libraries. New technologies have changed library work and created a need for ongoing education. Professionals must assess their personal strengths, develop leadership skills, understand how library users learn, and foster creativity in their staffs. Declining collections budgets coincide with the increasing demand for electronic resources and the rise of "value-added" services for a fee. There is a growing demand for strategic thinking and planning by library leaders and managers and their professional staff and for transformative leadership.

*Leaders in Libraries* (Sheldon, 1991) applies the management and leadership concepts of the 1970s and 1980s to the library community. Interviews were conducted with directors of major public or academic libraries, nationally recognized school librarians, executive directors of major library organizations, library school deans, state librarians, and other prominent members of the profession. "While the interviews did not elicit a definitive understanding of what distinguishes leaders from non-leaders, they did reinforce Bennis' contention that leadership can be and is exercised at every level of an organization. In most cases, the ability to exercise leadership has more to do with attitude than actual circumstances of the environment" (Sheldon, 1991, p. 82).

Management and leadership concepts which have evolved and remain the driving force in business and government are readily transferable to the library. Successful leaders must establish short- and long-term goals for the library along with specific workable objectives to accomplish them. They develop effective programs, assess and restructure their organizations as needed, and develop sound policies for the guidance of their library administration. Leaders earn support from staff and constituents by building a record of responsiveness and develop an effective group of advisors through whom to receive information (Williams, 1988, p. 103). Leadership can start anywhere, anytime, and even informal opportunities provide valuable experience. "Leading from below" means taking the risk to begin and guide new and possibly risky projects, mentoring others, and working in teams where one can exercise these qualities (Mech, 1996).

During the last two decades, academic institutions have faced continuously rising costs of resources, reduced budgets, loss of status within the institution, new academic expectations, and transitions from manual to highly technological integrated library systems (Newman, 1995, p. 94). As the structure of higher education organizations becomes flatter and team-based, librarians have the option to get involved in campus-wide arenas as a leadership opportunity. The administration of any organization requires leadership by all parties involved at some level. In campus-level roles, librarians may be able to present themselves to faculty and administrators as neutral on many issues and serve as arbitrators or consultants.

Librarians provide leadership by the very nature of the job by serving as a guide to scholars, students, and other leaders as they seek information. "Librarians lead by providing leads . . . [and] librarians play a key role in leading others to the sources of knowledge for understanding leadership" (Spitzberg, 1992, pp. 381, 389). Librarians must remember that they are educators in the broadest sense and their participation in the administration and organization of the institution as a whole is an important ingredient (Mech, 1996).

In comparing librarians with their counterparts throughout academia, business, and government, Mech (1996) suggests that library professionals must be concerned with the same career management strategies. They need basic skills, ambition, and a career vision beyond the library. Administrative support and encouragement for librarians' expanded leadership roles is essential, and the classic "other duties as assigned" phrase in a job description may open up unique opportunities for developing one's career. The advent and emergence of the "digital library" and the increased need for Internet training for faculty, students, and staff has merged the role of the computing center with the library. This gives the librarian another opportunity to cross outside the library boundary and make contacts with other campus departments.

### LEADERSHIP DEFINED

"Leadership is like the Abominable Snowman, whose footprints are everywhere but who is nowhere to be seen" (Bennis, 1986, p. 20). The inherent importance of leadership lacks an obvious and recognized tradition in the library setting, unlike business or bureaucracies where leaders are scrutinized and their performance quantitatively evaluated individually and against their peers. Prior to recent downsizing in academic libraries, most libraries followed long-established methods and time tested values to serve their clientele. For libraries to flourish today and tomorrow, the profession must identify and foster appropriate leadership skills and expertise among its members.

Leadership as a concept encompasses a mammoth body of literature. The online catalog at the University of California at Berkeley lists over 800 book titles on the subject. A search of the ABI/Inform database for 1971-1996 identified over 6,650 citations under leadership; a similar search of PsycINFO (1967-1996) located over 6,300 citations. Over 5,000 references for books, articles, and preprints were surveyed for the revision of *Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership* (Bass, 1981, p. xiv). Bennis and Nanus (1985) determined that decades of academic analysis have produced over 350 definitions of leadership.

In organizational terms, leadership is a focus of group activity and process, the exercise of influence, a demonstration of power relations, a differentiated role within an organization, and as the initiation of a role structure. Influence derives from strength of personality and its effects, the art of inducing cooperation and compliance, an action or behavior, a form of persuasion and inspiration, an instrument of goal achievement, and an emerging effect of personal interaction (Bass, 1981, pp. 7-14). Successful leadership requires sound management of human and financial resources, understanding and incorporating new technologies, far-sighted strategic planning, definitive problem solving, and useful innovation. It combines the managerial skills of budgeting and empirical audit-

ing with the infusion of new values and a new perspective. "The basic difficulty in definition stems from whether one looks at leadership broadly, considering it an occurrence of some modification of behavior or performance by a group due to the interaction of one or more members of the group; or whether one restricts the definition to the personal traits associated with leadership" (Mobley, 1989, p. 43).

Regardless of circumstances, leaders must know the culture of the workplace to gain a sense of continuity and significance as they relate to the workforce. Leaders hold a vision while questioning the mission. They need the opportunity and ability to ponder and resolve the fundamental issues of what must be accomplished and how. The workforce is directed toward the envisioned goal; the leader keeps a watchful eye on forces that could impede the progress toward that goal. "Leadership is a matter of drawing out from individuals those impulses, motives, and efforts which represent them most truly" (Riggs, 1982, p. ix). Leaders must ferret out the truth no matter what prejudice or misinformation is provided by followers or colleagues.

## LEADERSHIP THEORIES

In the 1930's and the 1940's, research by psychologists on the subject of leadership looked for the common traits that made up successful leaders, including both personality and intellectual qualities. Those who were thought to possess key traits could then participate in leadership programs to concentrate and improve upon these selected traits. This suggests that the ability to lead was inherent and that leadership training could only benefit those who seem to possess the selected traits. The trait theory has changed over the years and some researchers have failed to find one personality trait or set of qualities that could be used to discriminate leaders from nonleaders. (Fitzmaurice, 1992, p. 548)

Many bestselling books of the 1980s lauded the preeminence of people-centered leadership (Williams, 1988). Lowry (1988) presents six basic theories of leadership differentiated as personal traits, situations, organizations, power, vision, and ethical assessment. His first two theories are most applicable to library environs.

The personal trait theory presupposes that leadership is instinctive and derives from a set of traits more than from learned abilities, and that only some individuals possess the specific personality traits that develop into leadership behavior. Those traits associated with leadership ability include aggressiveness, desire to excel, cooperativeness, energy and enthusiasm, humor, intelligence, judgment, originality, persuasiveness, popularity, and sociability.

The situational leadership theory presumes that effective leaders develop their style to meet the requirements of the situation and the work-

ers. A constantly changing situation can be one of the volatile and unpredictable aspects of a library professional's career.

The personal characteristics of the leader and of the followers are highly stable when compared to the characteristics of the situation, which may be radically altered by the addition or loss of members, changes in interpersonal relationships, changes in goals, competition of extra-group influences and the like. . . . It is not especially difficult to find persons who are leaders. It is quite another matter to place these persons in situations where they will be able to function as leaders. (Riggs, 1982, p. x)

The role of the "followers" is a major part of the environment. "Leadership is viewed functionally, as a process, and is associated with a learnable set of behavioral practices. . . . Leadership always functions in relation to other persons and in a relationship between the leaders and the followers" (Albritton & Shaughnessy, 1989, p. xvii).

Sound management is as important as inherent leadership abilities when giving direction to support staff. "Studies have shown that effective leadership may account for only 10 to 15 percent of the variability in unit performance" (Williams, 1988, p. 102). Managers work within carefully defined boundaries, with known quantities, using well established techniques to accomplish planned ends. The means are stressed ahead of the ends. "A look at the literature of leadership theory and research reveals a heavy focus on what sounds more like effective supervision than what most of us would call leadership" (Euster, 1989, p. 6). And leaders are always in shorter supply than managers.

The traits of an individual leader are supplemented by the influences of the situation. "Few would maintain that 'situation' itself produces leadership. Apposite circumstances may be necessary, but they hardly seem sufficient. Most theorists now consider the person and situation within the context of the interactive effect of both" (Gertzog, 1989, p. 62). Library administrators in the future will have to combine a people-centered human resources style with a creative and artistic approach to management (Newman, 1995, p. 97).

## TEACHING LEADERSHIP AND MENTORING

Library schools may be an appropriate place to lay a foundation for training in leadership skills, but individuals with appropriate traits must also learn by example and observation. Williams (1988) notes that the mentoring process strengthens inherent traits and learned skills. Contemporary research examines the leader or potential leader in the context of his/her environment, including organizational climate, peer group, subordinates, supervisors, and work challenges combined with the belief that leaders can be developed. "Other students of leadership. . . call leadership not a gift but a learned talent . . . . Those who embrace the oppo-

site position, that leadership is inborn, contend that leadership training . . . teaches nothing more than the skills of good management" (Gertzog, 1989, p. 63).

Four personal qualifications are central to the development of leaders among academic librarians: (1) a first-rate mind with ability to solve problems, (2) solid undergraduate preparation in any of a variety of disciplines, (3) proven managerial abilities since even most entry-level research library positions now require some degree of management of either people or resources, and (4) an intellectual commitment to research librarianship (Battin, 1983, p. 23).

Leadership training is ... ineffective in changing the behavior of participants. Leadership training aimed not directly at leadership behavior itself, but at providing diagnostic skills for the identification of the nature of the situation and the behaviors appropriate to it, appears to offer considerable potential for the improvement of leadership effectiveness. (Albritton & Shaughnessy, 1989, p. 12)

Gertzog (1989) determined that the task of teaching leadership skills encompasses four areas which have been found to show improvement in manager effectiveness. First, select more appropriate people by assessing work to determine relevant skills, assessing candidates through tests, interviews, and situational exercises, and studying candidates' previous managerial history. Second, training in conceptual skills, problem analysis, forecasting, planning and decision-making, and creativity enhancement. Third, situational engineering to fit the situation to the skills and abilities of the available leader, perhaps by increasing or decreasing their authority. And fourth, organizational development and leadership improvement by working with consultants to improve relationships between leaders and subordinates and to promote team building.

Even those who believe that leadership derives primarily from personality acknowledge that these traits can be developed. "There are pragmatic reasons for researchers and consultants in the field to embrace the idea that leaders can be identified and trained" (Lowry, 1988, p. 24). Leadership development is a combination of assessing strengths and weaknesses, evaluating the immediate surroundings, and determining the needs of the situation. The identification of a mentor, establishing a mentor relationship, and the ongoing benefits of mentoring are critical. Women and minorities, traditionally omitted from top leadership positions within the library, may benefit most from a strong mentor relationship. Bernstein and Leach's (1985) ALA study on career development of librarians indicated that librarians felt that the need for interpersonal skills training escalated with their increased seniority on the job. Professional association activities ranked second (after participation in workshops and seminars) as a preferred professional development activity. "In the library field, the need to develop leaders, and the ability to do so, has been rec-

ognized. . . More recently the emphasis has changed—to an examination of the leader or potential leader in his or her environment, including organizational climate, peers, subordinates, bosses, and work challenges” (Fitzmaurice, 1992, p. 548). Managers and leaders have different attitudes toward their goals, careers, relationships with others, and with themselves. Managers can be trained to manage but leaders must be mentored (Zaleznik, 1977).

### PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

In *Libraries in the 90's* (Riggs & Sabine, 1988), active leaders provide opinions on the connection between leadership development and the role played by professional associations in fostering its growth. They suggest the development of valuable contacts through state and national associations, demonstrating the willingness to accept responsibilities through voluntary committee work, learning to work in groups and chair meetings, participating in workshops regularly, “paying your dues” by volunteering for “scut work,” and learning as you go. Other suggestions are to associate with leaders through the major professional organizations and learn leadership skills by direct contact (Riggs & Sabine, 1988, pp. 114-22).

Librarians new to the field may puzzle over the variety of choices in professional organizations and their educational and committee work opportunities. A mentor relationship can prove invaluable for a new librarian embarking on professional activities.

Neophyte librarians are justly confused as to what associations they should join, considering the large number of possibilities. Choices will probably be made on the basis of the individuals professional concerns and which organizations seem to best meet his needs, and ultimately, his purse. However, considering the role of library associations in society and the benefits derived by the profession from their existence, membership in professional associations is a prerequisite for professional growth and development. (McChesney, 1984, p. 223)

There is an apparent reciprocal relationship between leadership roles in the employing institution and in professional organizations. “Over the years the vast majority of ALA presidents have been directors of whatever library unit employed them. . . . ALA members appear to want their presidents to be the head of a large library institution or library education program” (Wiegand & Steffens, 1988, p. 18).

### PAST ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

Leadership development became a focus of attention for most major professional associations in the early 1980s. This rising interest occurred in part as a response to the political, social, and economic crises which

began in the 1960s and caused many people to lose faith in our national institutions and questioned the credibility of our leaders (Bennis & Nanus, 1985). Gregor (1989) provided an overview of the activities of the ARL, CLR, LC, OCLC, RLG, particularly the Management Review and Analysis program begun by ARL in the 1970s, and discussed the leadership role of these organizations in relation to technology assessment and development.

The Academic Library Management Intern Program, established by the Council on Library Resources in 1973, created an opportunity for professional mentorship (Williams, 1988, p. 109). CRL used a \$900,000 grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation to fund its human resources program entitled "Leadership Development for Managing New Information Technologies" which supported models and innovations for developing leaders who can recognize technological opportunities, make wise investment decisions, and control information technology (Council on Library Resources, 1994, p. 1). Another focus is helping professionals learn how to work with library users to create, maintain, and manage the electronic services by which they access information (Council on Library Resources, 1995, p. 13).

A CLR grant awarded to the University of Missouri-Columbia helped produce *Developing Leadership Skills: A Source Book for Librarians* in support of the conviction that libraries should enable new librarians to develop skills and achieve a broader understanding of research libraries' operations and management, and to provide middle- and senior-level librarians with opportunities to share their library management skills as mentors (Albritton & Shaughnessy, 1990).

By 1988, ALA included professional leadership in their strategic planning documents, and the decision was made to hold leadership programs for ALA Committee and round table chairs at the Midwinter meetings. "ALA leaders are effective. Elected leadership is responsible to adhere to ALA mission statements. The leadership must be informed to be effective, they must have a sense of the past and a vision of the future" (American Library Association, 1988, p. 75).

Additional ALA-sponsored programs have reinforced the ALA commitment. A special session of the 1996 ALA Midwinter meeting explored leadership opportunities available to academic librarians in the wider academic community. ACRL President Patricia Breivik promoted the theme "Every Librarian a Leader" in 1995. *C & RL News* inaugurated a guest column under the same title to cover leadership-related issues, and the 1996 ALA Annual conference held a special ACRL presidents program on the same topic. The ALA Library and Information Technology Association (LITA) and the Library Administration and Management Association (LAMA) produced a joint conference with the theme "Transforming Libraries: Leadership and Technology for the Information Age."

The New Jersey State statewide leadership development project created a residential training program in the early 1990s. Funded for two years, the project trained over fifty attendees from all types of libraries and areas of specialization who learned to assess their leadership style and skills in team building, communication, collaboration, and goal setting (Weaver & Burger, 1991). And the Snowbird Leadership Institute is a five-day residential leadership training program given annually since 1990 for nominated librarians who are relatively new in their careers. Past ALA presidents, library school deans, and others are on staff. Curriculum topics include self assessment; vision; creative ability; risk-taking skills; understanding; effecting and managing change; and a leader's power and influence (Summers & Summers, 1991).

The SLA Professional Development Program offered over forty educational opportunities during 1994-95, including the Executive Management program which provides advanced training to senior informational professionals. Mid-level managers can use the resources available at the Middle Management Institute, which offers a series of five courses, to prepare them for leadership roles. The content of the Middle Management course is updated regularly by the instructors to reflect the shifting challenges of the 1990s (*Bowker Annual*, 1996).

### FELLOWSHIPS, INSTITUTES, INTERNSHIPS

The major professional associations, often in conjunction with library schools, have established several fellowships, internships, and institutes over the last fifty years for leadership development and training. Some are widely available and others are more selective:

[The] majority of librarians learn their management or leadership skills on the job—by being thrust into a situation where they have to take some kind of action regardless of their prior training or preparation for the situation. . . . Although this process might enable them to deal effectively with specific situations, it often causes increased anxiety about their performance—even to the point of withdrawal to more comfortable, content-related jobs. The end result has been a shortage of librarians who are willing to assume leadership positions either in their own libraries or in professional associations. (Weaver & Burger, 1991, p. 36)

Williams (1988) discusses the CLR grant-funded UCLA Senior Fellows Program in UCLA's Graduate School of Library and Information Science which began in 1982. The Fellows Program provided learning experience through formal classroom work, research, independent study, discussion, and cooperative assignments. There existed a persistent shortage of distinctive professional leadership at a time of decreasing academic resources and a growing need for effective efficient management skills. There was a need for programs which teach, develop, and mentor identi-

fied leadership skills over a protracted period of time. The development of these types of programs require a continuing commitment of resources by the institutions who seek leaders. Potential leaders also need the external support of continuing education programs, professional recognition programs, fellowships, and institutes.

Anderson (1985) studied the careers of individuals trained by the UCLA Senior Fellows Program, academic librarians specifically selected for their current and potential leadership capabilities who studied advanced management techniques at UCLA during the summers of 1982 and 1983. The fellows graduates were compared with a control group of ACRL personal member academic librarians and demonstrated significantly greater professional activity, greater mobility, and more advancement into positions of managerial responsibility. These librarians became "leaders in academic librarianship, whether male or female, started earlier, published more, spoke and taught more, and moved more often than their peers. Consciously or subconsciously, by the specific way they conducted their careers, they created their own leadership image" (Anderson, 1985, p. 331).

#### ASSOCIATIONS' CURRENT AND FORTHCOMING PROGRAMS

The Medical Library Association is developing a structured educational policy for its continuing education activities that incorporates guidelines for "graduate programs in health sciences librarianship . . . [that] constructs a framework for all education programs and opportunities coordinated by MLA" (Medical Library Association, 1997). Continuing learning (defined as mentoring situations and self taught situations within the workplace) and continuing education are both conditions of professional practice for health sciences librarians. MLA suggests that a collaboration of the workplace, professional organizations, library and information schools, and commercial vendors and publishers, will be required to establish a continuum of learning.

SLA presented "Competencies for Special Librarians of the 21st Century" at the 1996 annual SLA conference. The program is a guideline of professional and personal competencies that all information professionals must achieve in order to ensure the viability of special librarianship. The professional competencies relate to knowledge in information resources, technology, management, and research, and the ability to use these areas of knowledge in providing library services. Personal competencies represent a set of skills, attitudes, and values which foster high professional activities and standards (SLA Special Committee, 1996).

ALA presented the Emerging Leaders Institute in the summer of 1997. The purpose of the institute was to train and coach librarians in conflict resolution, decision-making, coalition building, communication, and pro-

professional image. ALA leaders will be linked to participants for follow-up and encouragement.

The Association of Research Libraries' Office of Management Services offers a Training and Leadership Development Program which designs and delivers "learning events [rather than courses] which specifically integrate managerial and leadership concepts with immediately applicable workplace skills" (Association of Research Libraries, 1997). These events are held several times each year throughout the country. ARL's Training and Staff Development Program assists academic librarians in finding ways to develop their human resources programs. Learning-on-Site workshops are promoted as a cost-effective approach to training and staff development. Among their achievements are the Library of Congress leadership curriculum (*Bowker Annual*, 1996). The Library of Congress began a fifteen-month Leadership Development Program in January 1995 designed to increase the number of minorities who are prepared to assume leadership positions in libraries (*Bowker Annual*, 1996).

#### CAREER MODELS AND CAREER MANAGEMENT

There is no shortage of books and articles offering advice regarding general career management. Specific targeted career advice for information professionals is more limited. Career history and management information for specific types of librarians (school librarians, media specialists, law librarians) are identifiable. For academic and research librarians, many of the resources that pertain to faculty will also apply. Also, advice about specific areas or phases of a librarian career can be found. However, the specifics of career paths in libraries is more scarce. Cubberly's (1996) book, *Tenure and Promotion for Academic Librarians*, is unique in offering guidance to the new academic librarians.

#### CAREER ANCHORS MODEL

Schein (1977) developed a taxonomy of career anchors—those motives, values, and self-perceived skills that shape an individual's career. The five basic career anchors are managerial competence, technical/functional competence, organizational security, creativity, and autonomy. Most individuals adopt one major anchor as the guiding force in their career while also remaining concerned in varying degrees about other motives. The primary anchor—Schein's "master motive"—shapes the focus of participation in career activities and motivates professional behavior:

The career anchor . . . results from an interaction between the person with his needs and talents, and the work environment with its opportunities and constraints . . . During the first few years of his career, the person learns more concretely what he is good at, what he values, and what he needs. He also learns what kinds of jobs or work environments frustrate him because he does not have the tal-

ent, motivation, or values needed to function in that environment. As his experience accumulates, the person learns what kinds of jobs or work environment to seek and which to avoid. The underlying syndrome of motives, values, and talents now serves as a guide and constraint on career decisions. The career anchor is more than a motive because it now includes aspects of the self-image based on work experiences. (Schein, 1977, pp. 52-53)

A career is impacted by societal expectations of work activities which result in monetary and status rewards “[that] reflect both individual and societal definitions of what is a worthwhile set of activities to pursue throughout a lifetime” (Schein, 1977, p. 52). The individual’s expectations of the tangible and intangible rewards which a job should provide evolve through the stages of his/her career. Personality and personal life choices as well as the inherent qualities of the work environment work together to determine the “fit” of a career choice.

### CAREER PATHS MODEL

A career paths model developed by Kong and Goodfellow (1988) used previous studies of engineers’ careers to identify four distinct stages that a professional might go through. His examination of the primary roles, psychological issues, and necessary skills for each stage “provides academic librarians with a set of specified career expectations and a process for managing activities for transition to future career stages” (Kong & Goodfellow, 1988, p. 214).

An assessment of professional issues, organizational issues, technological concerns, and required competencies facing academic librarians might be useful in determining one’s own stage and deciding what the next logical step might be for advancement in the path. Professional issues include faculty status and the professional image of the librarian. Organizational issues include the structure and bureaucratic model where one works, opportunities for advancement, and career guidelines within the organization. Technological concerns derive from the increased computerization in all areas of librarianship and the accompanying changes in the role of the librarian. Required competencies are achieved through continuing education and necessary retraining to master the evolving professional role.

Initially, the professional is an apprentice, dependent upon supervisors for training and advice. An apprentice must develop a mentor relationship with someone who can advise on the organizational culture. Along with establishing peer relationships, apprentices must establish a professional identity and develop self-confidence and appropriate competencies.

In the second stage, the professional becomes a colleague. This stage is characterized by increased self confidence, visibility, and establishment

of a reputation as a competent specialist. There is less reliance upon supervisors and mentors, a move toward increased independence, and development of one's own professional standards. This is an especially critical stage in career development of individuals in many organizations. In academic libraries, many librarians remain at this level for their entire career.

The third stage develops when the professional becomes the mentor, exercising increased responsibility for influencing, directing, and developing others, especially newer librarians. Mentors have broadened their interests and capabilities beyond their basic jobs. The psychological transition to the mentor stage involves a changed perspective regarding work relationships and organizational objectives. At this stage there are usually multiple reporting structures and the assumption of responsibility for the work of others.

At the fourth stage, the professional becomes a sponsor and is generally removed from day-to-day operations. He or she exerts influence in determining the future direction of the organization. A sponsor interacts with external elements of the organization such as library networks, commercial services, university administration, and professional organizations. And a sponsor directs resources toward specific goals while developing other individuals to become future "sponsors." At this stage, a librarian can provide leadership by formulating policies and approve programs bringing together resources to further new ideas or new directions of the organization or contributing significant breakthroughs in the information field.

## CAREER MANAGEMENT

*Developing Leadership Skills* "is organized and designed to enable librarians, regardless of their roles in an organization, to assess where they are with respect to leadership ability, and then to take measures to improve their effectiveness as professionals" (Albritton & Shaughnessy, 1990, p. xix). Hoffmann (1988) evaluates career management in three parts. The early years of a career and the first professional positions offer the opportunity of developing networks among colleagues inside and outside the organization, solidify the "fit" between the person and their environment or organization, locate mentors, develop special skills not obtained through library education, obtain challenging and visible assignments, and learn the culture of the organization and profession. The middle years of a career may offer the broadest professional leadership opportunities, although the demands of family life may come into conflict during these years. Career tasks often include making technical contributions, developing other staff, functioning as the organization's representative in outside groups, providing direction for the organization, exercising power to ensure accomplishment of critical functions, repre-

senting the organization, and sponsoring future leaders. During the later years, there is an attempt to transfer accumulated knowledge to those who will be developed into new leaders.

A structured career path is a valid goal, but job advancement often occurs through chance and opportunities, a series of "accidents" that are later rationalized as career choices. "Rules about participation in professional associations are less codified than rules about civil service promotions procedures, but all participants know that they exist" (Hoffmann, 1988, p. 167).

Broad experience is expected in library directors, and recommendations from leaders in the library field which result from leadership roles in professional organizations are an important element when seeking academic library director positions. The process for hiring library directors, often including year-long national searches, demonstrates a relationship between the size of the institution and the value placed on power within the profession when hiring a new library director. It is commonly assumed that "rising within the ranks of one institution does not produce the breadth and depth of experience required for creative management" (Newman, 1995, p. 95). In addition, library directorships have traditionally been a men's club. Women were often relegated to, and accepted the lesser role of, committee participants rather than striving for leadership positions. Mech (1996) suggests that all librarians must feel empowered to exercise leadership with support from the administration to encourage the librarians' expanded leadership roles. Individuals might take advantage of the classic "other duties as assigned" phrase in ones' job description as a lead-in to unique opportunities. For librarians to grow and succeed as leaders, they need ambitions, skills, and a career or personal vision that reaches beyond the library. Higher education is in transition, moving from hierarchical to flatter organizational structures and team environments. Librarians should view the concept of change as a leadership opportunity rather than as a threat and be encouraged to take risks.

Many academic librarians are reluctant to cross barriers into other campus arenas where opportunities for leadership surely exist, but the administration of the organization requires leadership from all corners. The development of the "digital library," the merging of computing centers and libraries, the increasing need for Internet training for faculty and students, and the development of resource centers which go beyond the definition of the more traditional library, give librarians an opportunity to make contact with other campus departments. "If librarians ignore the fact that they are educators too, they will not take advantage of their options for wider participation" (Mech, 1996, p. 351). Leadership opportunities vary from campus to campus and one should be aware of the institutional culture before jumping in. But as libraries and institu-

tions change, the librarian must rise to the challenge to facilitate the process. Campus-level involvement by librarians can be beneficial because faculty and administrators may see the librarian as being neutral on many issues.

“Sometimes we endow individuals who lead or initiate new efforts with superhuman qualities, when in reality they are only mortals who want to be involved and decide to take an active role” (Mech, 1996, p. 351). The ambitious librarian can become visible on campus, build coalitions, take chances, volunteer, be active in academic and professional organizations, be knowledgeable of higher education trends and issues, develop a reputation as knowledgeable about the institution as a whole rather than just the library, acquire a mentor, develop electronic-age skills and teach them to others, work long hours, be assertive, and speak with authority.

For librarians desiring a leadership role, the importance of participation in professional associations should not be overlooked:

Through membership in organizations and associations, library leaders can be developed and practice leadership skills by virtue of holding office. Natural or recognized leaders appreciate and utilize appropriate, and sometimes overlapping, organizational arenas to exert influence. Service on boards, committees or task forces, as well as participation in ground breaking invitational conferences, can promote leadership potential, enhance influence and strength. (Gregor, 1989, p. 188)

Cubberly (1996) notes that academic librarians are expected to join and participate in professional organizations which provide opportunities for contributing to one's library, institution, and profession while building a dossier of involvement. This activity should begin as soon as one secures a tenure-track position. “Volunteering is essential for involvement in professional associations. . . . Look for things that need doing, find out who is in charge, and offer to help” (Cubberley, 1996, p. 47). A willingness to work, organizational skills, and other talents developed via committee work may lead to becoming an officer in the association. This is a major time and energy commitment, and one must assess carefully if one is willing and able to commit the time.

## GUIDELINES FOR PROFESSIONAL EVALUATION

Most university libraries have written documentation on criteria for the promotion of librarians. In California, higher education institutions share similar requirements for promotion despite variance in the status of librarians. For example, in the California State University system of twenty-one campuses offering primarily master's degrees, librarians have faculty status. The University of California system (nine doctoral degree-granting campuses) classifies librarians as academic staff with promotions

governed by criteria such as that expressed by the Librarians' Association of the University of California (LAUC):

The first criterion is professional competence and service within the library. Outstanding service within the library is the primary and absolutely essential consideration in any merit or promotion review. However, for a librarian to be considered for promotion . . . recognition should also be accorded to performance in . . . professional activity outside the library, university and public service, research and other activity. (Librarians' Association of the University of California, 1989, p. 1)

Many librarians gain promotion by pursuing the administrative and managerial tasks as the central concerns which advance their career opportunities. At academic institutions where librarians are granted faculty status, career paths may involve more scholarly efforts and publications than under a managerial model (Rux, 1988).

As academic employees of the University, librarians are responsible for participating in professional activities outside the library, and for University and public service, and for research and other creative activity. . . Knowledge initially gained through professional education is expanded through participation in the activities of local, regional, state, national, and international professional associations. . . Professional growth and development is a requirement for retention and advancement in the Librarian series. (Librarians' Association of the University of California, 1983, pp. 1-2)

At California State University, Long Beach, evaluation criteria for librarians includes effective librarianship; scholarly, professional, and creative activities; and library, university, and community service. Librarians have faculty status at the California State University campuses and are expected to achieve at least adequate accomplishments in all three areas. Professional activity involves "Membership, with participation and leadership, in local, state, and national professional organizations, and recognition—e.g., receipt of honors, awards, fellowships" (*Retention, Tenure, and Promotion*, 1991, p. 7). Planning and giving workshops can be accomplished through professional library associations. For professional service, the evaluation process emphasizes "(1) the quality and significance of the activity, as measured by the degree to which the activity contributes to the mission of the University; and (2) the extent and level of the candidate's involvement" (*Policy on Retention . . .*, 1996, p. 6).

Stanford University's (1989) *Academic Staff - Libraries Handbook* indicates criteria for the various ranks, the scope of the job assignments, and the level of responsibilities involved. Evidence of professional contribution and achievement beyond the library is expected at the latter two of the four ranks of librarians. And movement through the ranks must include external evidence of expertise both within and beyond the scope

of the immediate job assignment. Cubberley (1996) provides an example of a typical tenure and promotion document and its requirements. Many university evaluation guidelines are based upon documents written by ACRL, Association of American Colleges, and American Association of University Professors. They clearly point to the necessity for a range of professional activities beyond the usual job duties: "Professional growth should be documented by evidence of activities which further such development. Since talents and inclinations, demands of positions, and opportunities vary, the individual librarian must decide how to contribute to the profession and in which direction to grow" (Cubberly, 1996, p. 108).

Traditionally, library schools have recognized the importance of professional organizations for librarians, but the future of that relationship is uncertain with the advent of "Information Management" schools replacing traditional library schools. Despite the shifting currents of the information age, associations remain significant sources for professionals, offering development programs, publication of research studies, explorations of trends, and annual conferences as the means for sharing ideas and experiences (Sperr-Brisfjord, 1989).

Work within professional organizations varies from committee work, organization of workshops or presentations, writing, editing, program planning, and fund raising. All provide opportunities to develop new skills, self-education, networking, improve one's profession, add to the body of professional knowledge, and provide creativity and innovation in the profession. All are opportunities to grow and establish leadership traits and behaviors.

## CONCLUSION

Controversies persist over the definition of leadership, although most professionals agree that the skills can be developed in many individuals. Demonstrated leadership in libraries is an urgent need amid the current whirlwind of technological change, downsized staff and budgets, and rising expectations and demands for information. Professional associations and organizations can and must have a large role in providing self assessment tools and opportunities, training resources, and mentoring opportunities through courses, internships, and fellowships. Continuing education classes, institutes, and workshops are always under development and revision by the major information professional associations. Academic and research libraries, if they want their professional staffs to participate fully and productively in strategic planning and strategic thinking, must also participate by providing as many learning opportunities as they can afford. At the same time, individual professionals cannot count on their workplace to seek out and offer these opportunities; they must take responsibility to seek out a wide range of educational and mentor-

ing situations. If one wants to play a leadership role in the information profession, the fluctuating situation of today's libraries provide plenty of opportunities. Management of one's own training and risk-taking behaviors provide chances to demonstrate leadership in libraries. There are opportunities to develop one's leadership skills if they are sought out. There is a real need to identify potential leaders and provide them with appropriate information and encouragement as early in their careers as possible, supported by a core of leadership development programs.

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