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Lots of Ways to Be a Leader

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OLA Quarterly

We Can Do It!

**Lots of
Ways
to Be a
Leader**



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Upcoming Issue

Fall 2018

*Open Educational Resources:
Opportunities,
Challenges, Impact*

Lots of Ways to Be a Leader



ON THE COVER

Originally created by illustrator J. Howard Miller to boost morale among factory workers on the homefront during World War II, “We Can Do It!” has been adopted as a symbol of strength, leadership, and determination by people around the world. The poster was not originally intended to represent Rosie the Riveter—a populist allegorical figure introduced in the early days of the war—but the character and the image became synonymous in the decades that followed. When we asked library staff around Oregon to “show us their Rosies,” they knew exactly what we were talking about.

History.com Editors (2010, April 24). *Rosie the riveter*. Retrieved October 12, 2018, from <https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/rosie-the-riveter>.

From the Guest Editor



JANE SCHEPPKE

Jane is a graduate of Mills College and the University of British Columbia iSchool. She has worked for the Crook County Library in Prineville, Oregon since 2013, and has been the Assistant Director there since 2016. In her spare time, Jane is an avid cartoonist and digital multimedia artist. It is Jane's personal and professional goal to be the manager at the Sesame Street branch of the New York Public Library.

Lots of Ways to Be a Leader Or: I Am a Library Leader, and So Can You!

People tend to have a fixed mindset about who “librarians” are and how library staff should act, represent their profession, and lead. When I say “people,” I am envisioning every public official, captain of industry and Lyft driver who has ever asked me how many people I shush in a day, and then I am envisioning a rain of cartoon anvils. To be fair, I’m also thinking of a younger version of myself, picking out the dowdiest clothes in my wardrobe for my first day as a circulation clerk at my college library.

At that point I had no aspirations towards a career in libraries. From my outsider’s standpoint—and, as the child of two librarians, a relatively informed outsider’s standpoint—librarianship was for quiet people who loved to enforce rules and approached the things that made my life worth living (popular culture, comedy in all its forms, spicy food) with a magnifying glass and tweezers, if at all. I failed to see the connection between the librarian in my head and the person I was, or the person I was going to this women’s college to become: a badass, social-justice-warrior, take-no-bull lady dynamo. The kind of person who makes *things happen* (what things? I don’t know! *Things!* I was 18!), and who probably also wears magenta blazers with shoulder pads and pointy jewelry you could weaponize in a melee.

As I looked at myself in my “librarian uniform”—black cords, red polo, not realizing how much I looked like a Target employee—I thought to myself, “eh, I can be this person for three hours a day if it means I can get a non-cafeteria meal once in a while.”

Thirteen years and many burritos later, I’m still a loudmouth slob who routinely cracks wise and writes policies galore but enforces the only rule that makes sense to me: *don’t be a dick* (Wheaton, 2007). I’m also the Assistant Director of Library Services at Crook County Library, and someone who wears the title “librarian” with pride. I got here through the guiding example of peers and bosses who showed me that “librarian” is not synonymous with “lame-o” and that in fact the best library leaders—the ones who do the most to effect positive change in their institutions and their communities—are the ones who

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Veronica Vichit-Vadakan,
Oregon College of Oriental Medicine

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embrace their strengths and dreams without compromise. This was the central thesis around which the inaugural Leadership Institute of the Oregon Library Association (LIOLA) was built, but it wasn't entirely news to me.

My transformation into a librarian began the same day I put on my schlub disguise and set off for my first day at work. Turned out, the only other people at the library who were dressed for retail were also froshies with brand new work-study placements. Everybody else looked like themselves, and they looked like they belonged. I realized immediately that this was due to the efforts of the head reference librarian, Michael. Michael wore crushed velvet smoking jackets and clashing bow ties à la Duckie in *Pretty in Pink*. He DJed at scuzzy weirdo clubs on the weekends and challenged patrons and staff to “cutesy battles”—reach in your pockets, pull out whatever you have strategically planted there (perhaps a Happy Meal toy or a sheet of Sanrio stickers), and may the cutest doodad win.

My first thought upon meeting Michael: “This is the coolest dude in the world.” Later, I came to realize that the qualities that made Michael a cool dude also made him an excellent librarian and a world-class leader. He was passionate about forging rich connections between the library-as-institution and the college community at large. By being himself, he let students know that they could be themselves in the library, too. People weren't afraid to approach library staff, or to ask for reference help—something that a lot of academic libraries struggle with. They also weren't afraid to give voice to their own interests and quirks; these conversations resulted in the development of an eclectic browsing collection that kept people coming back even when they didn't have a paper due the next day. It was a rich, friendly, cozy place to be—kind of a little slice of Sesame Street on a Paper Chase campus. I was hooked.

In this issue, you'll find more stories of librarians who, by leading from their individual strengths, have made their libraries, communities, and the Oregon library community better places to be. Jane Corry and Elaine Hirsch kick off this issue with a discussion of the planning and coordination that went into the first LIOLA, and how their own strengths—as defined by the Gallup StrengthsFinder assessment around which the LIOLA curriculum was based—influenced and guided that process. Hillsboro's Courtney Gill writes about how a collaborative, compassion-driven leadership model, combined with strategic outreach partnerships, produced the HPL Cares series of community service-based library programs. Mark Richardson talks about how he has employed the four-stage Situational Leadership model and his own supportive leadership tendencies in helping his Teen Council discover their strengths. Julie Gaida, acquisitions specialist at Pacific University and the head of a department-of-one, discusses how she overcame the insular nature of her position and made lasting connections with the campus community and her fellow Oregon librarians. Finally, librarians who want to exercise leadership from a non-administrative or non-supervisory position will find much wisdom in Melissa Little and Dawn Marie Lowe-Wincentsen's articles; both address how “followers” can, with confidence and authenticity, be agents of change. Melissa's article might even help you get into a titled leadership position, which is pretty cool work if you can get it.

This rambling introduction concludes with a full-hearted endorsement of the program that inspired this issue of the *Quarterly* in the first place: LIOLA. LIOLA is essential for





Star Khan,
Driftwood Public Library

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every librarian or library-adjacent person who has ever wondered if their style of leadership (or not even leadership, necessarily; just their style of being a person in the world) makes them an asset or a liability to their community. I just described *you*, didn't I, you imposter-syndrome-having basket case!? Even if you are a world-class weirdo, LIOLA will teach you how to recognize, celebrate, and then mobilize your unique strengths for the betterment of your library and your universe, and to recognize, celebrate, and mobilize the unique strengths of others. You'll also get to meet other cool library-types from across the state and get one-on-one advice from bonafide mentors in the field.

And guess what—some of those mentors are even world-class weirdos themselves! If that doesn't convince you that library leadership is within the grasp of anyone who knows how to use their powers for good, I'll eat my pointy jewelry.

References

Wheaton, W. (2007, August 27). *Wil's finale* [Video File]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TK-H0epcfoQ>

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LIOLA: The Long and Winding Road

by Jane Corry

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JANE CORRY is a retired Youth Services Librarian from Multnomah County Library. She was the President of OLA in 2015–2016 and appointed to OLA’s Leadership Task Force in 2013. Jane served as chair of the LIOLA 2018 Planning Committee.



ELAINE HIRSCH is the Associate Director of Watzek Library at Lewis & Clark College. She is the Vice President/President Elect of OLA and serves on OLA’s Leadership Committee with Jane.

ELAINE: Jane, here we are a month past the inaugural Leadership Institute of the Oregon Library Association (LIOLA)! Can you believe we’ve come this far since we began working together to support leadership development for OLA members in 2013?

JANE: I’m so glad we both stuck with it. I think it’s the longest single project I’ve ever worked on.

ELAINE: LIOLA was held May 16 to 19, 2018 in Pendleton. It had been a while since I’d been to Eastern Oregon, and I was reminded what a charming town Pendleton is with the River Parkway to walk along and the historic downtown with shops and restaurants. I think the location provided an opportunity for many to travel outside of the Willamette Valley and focus on the institute and leadership development.

JANE: Pendleton is lovely. I’d actually never spent any time there at all. As soon as (former State Librarian) MaryKay Dahlgreen suggested Pendleton, I thought it was a great idea. People outside the Valley often feel like OLA is Willamette Valley-centric. Pendleton Public Library director Mary Finney joined the committee and was invaluable with local arrangements.





Jen G,
Oregon City Public Library

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ELAINE: There were 22 participants from libraries around the state placed into cohorts of five or six people with an additional two mentors per cohort. The curriculum focused on the lessons from Gallup's *Strengths Based Leadership*. Participants were asked to complete the Gallup StrengthsFinder assessment prior to LIOLA, and received a personalized strengths-based leadership guide to their top five identified strengths. Cohorts were organized by the assessment results so each participant brought unique strengths to the cohort conversations and activities.

JANE: I like the StrengthsFinder a lot. Since I took it, filtering my way of dealing with things through that lens is very helpful. I found it interesting, though not surprising, that so many of the participants were strong in the Strategic Thinking domain of leadership. What are your strengths?

ELAINE: Most of my strengths fall under the Relationship Building domain, and include developer, empathy, and individualization. I also have input under the Strategic Thinking domain, and maximizer under the Influencing domain.

ELAINE: The LIOLA planning group worked with Dietra Stivahtis of Vibrant Business Solutions to develop the curriculum and facilitate the institute. She was amazing! Jane, how did you locate the funding to hire Dietra and plan the institute?

JANE: This is a case of where my number one strength of adaptability came into play. I have three strengths in the Strategic Thinking domain (ideation, intellection and learner) and activator in the Influencing domain. When Elsa Loftis was OLA president during 2016 to 2017, we both got an e-mail from Maria Wagner, a former "storytime mom" and intern of mine who was the interim library director at Portland Community College (PCC). She said that PCC was the fiduciary agent for a grant that Northwest Central had. She said the money actually belonged to OLA, that it needed to get off their books by June 2018, and it needed to be spent on training. My eyes lit up! Since 2013 we'd been working on strategies for funding a leadership institute. I immediately asked Elsa to appoint me to spearhead the initiative. Or was that activator strength?!

The Road to LIOLA:

OLA's Leadership Task Force and Leadership Development Committee

ELAINE: In 2014, OLA's president Penny Hummel created a Leadership Task Force to research options to provide the association's membership with leadership training opportunities. This is when Jane and I first started working together on leadership initiatives. After breaking ties with Pacific Northwest Library Association (PNLA) in 2010, it became more challenging for OLA members to attend the PNLA Leadership Institute. I was among the Oregon applicants who were not admitted to PNLA Leads, and I believed OLA should provide leadership development opportunities for its members.





Ann Schepcke,
Salem Public Library (Retired)

JANE: Yes, getting something like this started has been a goal of OLA since leaving PNLA. I've been reading through old board minutes to help remember how this all unfolded. When Candice Watkins was OLA president during 2014–2015, we had several meetings with the Washington Library Association (WLA) about getting something going with WLA, but funding was always an issue.

ELAINE: Candice was a champion of leadership development and proposed the creation of the OLA Leadership Committee, which was an outgrowth of the Leadership Task Force. The committee was charged with overseeing leadership development opportunities for the OLA membership, including creating and managing leadership trainings and programs, as well as serving as leadership mentors. At the annual conference in 2015, the well-attended preconference, *Leading From Any Position: Creating Learning Libraries in Five Easy Lessons*, was offered, featuring Becky Schreiber and John Shannon. Schreiber and Shannon had been facilitators of PNLA Leads, and evaluations from this preconference clearly indicated that OLA members were interested in additional leadership development opportunities.

JANE: That preconference, which was limited to 50, filled up immediately. That really let us know that leadership training was something OLA members craved. At the same time the Leadership Task Force was becoming a committee, the Scholarship Committee was having a self-examination. For years, they were giving scholarship money to MLIS students. It was decided that it would be better to focus on professional development for people who already work in libraries, and the task of approving these scholarships then moved to the new Leadership Committee.

I remember Candice's last meeting as president. She had worked so hard to find money to get a Leadership Institute started. You were there, right? She found \$5,000 seed money through a donor who has given money to libraries, but the Board at that time voted against it as it didn't feel like OLA was ready to facilitate an institute. There were issues about being able to sustain it. The Board felt that strategic planning needed to come first and sustainable funding needed to be found for an institute. It was a very interesting meeting.

ELAINE: Yes, I remember that, and that it was under your presidency from 2015 to 2016 that the Leadership Committee was charged with developing a proposal to distribute scholarships to assist in funding leadership development opportunities for the membership.

JANE: Yes, that came out of that same meeting. Between the scholarships shifting focus, the Leadership Committee developing, and the beginning of the strategic planning all happening at the same time, it's no wonder I can't remember the details!

ELAINE: The first scholarships were awarded in fall 2016, and have funded OLA member participation in a variety of development opportunities, including a Women in Leadership program at Harvard, an ALA conference, and library management and leadership institutes including LIOLA! All members of OLA, regardless of position or employment, are eligible to apply for scholarships up to \$1,000. Up to three scholarships may be awarded annually.

<http://www.olaweb.org/scholarships-ola>





Sara Thompson,
Deschutes Public Library

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ELAINE: LIOLA planning got underway after the scholarships were initiated, which brings us back to the start of our conversation! I look forward to the second LIOLA, and to see how leadership development continues to evolve within OLA!

JANE: I'm so happy that it finally came to fruition eight years after OLA left PNLA with the promise of creating a substitute for the PNLA Leads Institute. I think our strategy of using the grant money and saving the tuition money for the next institute will make it sustainable. And, having scholarships helps make it more affordable for people from smaller libraries. 🐼



The participants, mentors and staff of LIOLA 2018.



Cheers to the Leadership Institute of OLA (LIOLA)!

HPL Cares:

Leading by Taking Action

by Courtney Gill
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Hillsboro Public Library
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COURTNEY GILL began working at Hillsboro Public Library in 2009 after completing an internship at the Department of Human Services. She only intended to briefly work at the library while starting a career in social work, but the library stole her heart with the lure of books and shared community. Since then, she has held various positions at HPL. She currently works as a Library Supervisor based out of the Shute Park location where she works passionately to reduce barriers to library service and welcome all. When not at the library, Courtney enjoys traveling, hiking and sharing laughs with her family and friends.

Like many Oregon cities, Hillsboro is changing at a fast pace. Rapid growth has created many challenges for the City's most vulnerable community members. Two top challenges include housing instability and food insecurity. While the library serves as a vital community hub, the Hillsboro Public Library (HPL) continuously seeks to make a greater impact. The Hillsboro Public Library Leadership Team (LLT) approved the formation of the staff-led HPL Cares team. HPL Cares consists of six big-hearted library staff members who took the idea of a library-sponsored community service group and developed a community-focused inspiration team.

The HPL Cares team is staffed by HPL employees and supported by a supervisor liaison. Aside from the supervisor liaison, the team members do not hold official leadership positions within the library. As an entirely employee-run team, there is no hierarchy. Team members are directed by their passion for service. With each new project, team members rotate the responsibility of project lead. With the support of their fellow team members, the project lead has the opportunity to practice team management, communication, and organization skills. While these are invaluable skills in a leadership position, they are not the sum total of what it means to be a leader. Leaders set an example and inspire those around them to follow.

HPL Cares passionately pursues avenues for improving the community they work within while providing a path for their colleagues and library patrons to easily follow. Ask any team member and they will proudly share their mission: *We Partner. We Support. We Care.* HPL Cares capitalizes on the trust the library has built within the community to spearhead service-based projects that encourage staff and patron involvement while seeking to deepen empathy among the citizens of Hillsboro.





Betsy Romeo,
Salem Public Library

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HPL staff and patrons at an Oregon Food Bank food packing event.

We Partner

From inception, the HPL Cares team recognized that the route to successful community engagement is built on strong partnerships with local nonprofit agencies. Team members never attempt to solve the social issues facing our community but work to collaborate with service organizations addressing social needs. The team shares the incredible work that is being done by service organizations with the wider Hillsboro community to support their efforts. Once HPL Cares was formed in early 2017, the team was quickly inundated with requests for help. The team's first projects started by hosting food, clothing and supply drives in support of selected nonprofits. The collection drives allow the team to highlight specific challenges community members face and provide patrons with a low commitment platform to help. Memorable collection drives include:

- Washington County Project Homeless Connect Sock Drive—206 pairs of socks, 26 pairs of gloves, and seven hats were collected in support of Project Homeless Connect, a semiannual event bringing together local businesses and agencies to connect homeless citizens with resources. <http://www.phcwashco.org/>
- McKinney-Vento Clothing Drive—Clothing and personal hygiene products were collected in support of the Hillsboro School District's effort to help provide for homeless youth, grades K–12. <https://www.hsd.k12.or.us/Page/1968>
- Oregon Food Bank—Over the course of one month, patrons and staff donated 347 pounds of food to the Oregon Food Bank. <https://www.oregonfoodbank.org>





Aaron Novinger,
Oregon City Public Library

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- Washington County Project Homeless Connect School Supply Drive—HPL Cares answered a call for school supplies by gathering 32 backpacks along with dozens of boxes full of pencils, crayons, rulers, scissors, and a multitude of other school supplies.
- Astronomers Without Borders—Many remember the 2017 total eclipse. As excitement for the event waned, HPL Cares gave solar eclipse viewing glasses a second life. Instead of finding their way into trash cans around town, 1,714 glasses were collected at Hillsboro libraries and sent to Astronomers Without Borders to support students viewing the eclipses that will cross South America and Asia in 2019. <https://astronomerswithoutborders.org>
- Harkins House Holiday Gift Drive—HPL Cares helped collect dozens of holiday gifts, as well as a generous \$500 donation from the Friends of the Hillsboro Library, in support of Harkins House residents. Harkins House is a short-term residential shelter, providing care and evaluation for youth between the ages of 12 and 17 awaiting pending court cases. <https://www.co.washington.or.us/juvenile/harkinshouse/>
- NAMI Washington County Art Supply Drive—Library patrons donated an overwhelming number of art supplies in support of NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness). The supplies are used for art therapy programs open to individuals and families impacted by mental illness. <https://www.washconami.org/>

Based on the flood of requests to help, it became evident that vetting criteria were needed to narrow down the multiple agency requests to a manageable number. Starting in 2018, the team asked library staff members to nominate agencies for project consideration. Their goal for this calendar year is to make project selections based on the following requirements for each nomination: nonprofit agencies serving Washington County residents; organizations that share the HPL mission and vision; and groups library employees and patrons enthusiastically support. The vetting criteria helps the team to balance the types of help (service projects, collection efforts, youth or adult focus, etc.) and rotate the selected agencies from year-to-year. This has led to greater staff participation and excitement around selected service projects.

We Support

As partnerships and community participation increased due to the popularity of the collection drives, HPL Cares sought to more actively engage patrons and staff. The City of Hillsboro sponsors HillsDOer Day every October. The citywide service projects encourage Hillsboro citizens to gather their friends, family, and neighbors and spend the day volunteering. Inspired by the annual event's motto—"Do Good! Feel Good!"—HPL Cares set forth to organize a food packing event at the Oregon Food Bank to help library staff and patrons join in HillsDOer Day. Twenty-five library patrons and staff members joined together and packed over 8,000 pounds of food, enough to make 6,793 meals. As library staff members and their families worked side by side with patrons, new friendships and connections were formed.

Encouraged by the success of the HillsDOer Day project, HPL Cares now plans quarterly staff volunteer projects throughout the city. Projects are chosen based on staff input from the annual nomination process. Because the library is a seven-day-a-week





Jennifer Costley,
Pendleton Public Library

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operation and library staff tends to work nontraditional hours, HPL Cares team members work with the chosen agencies to schedule multiple volunteer shifts and coordinate staff signups. As City of Hillsboro employees, library staff are encouraged to volunteer and asked to log their hours through the Hillsboro Helps initiative. Hillsboro Helps is a City-sponsored program that supports City employees as they volunteer throughout the community. Employees are eligible to log up to eight hours annually during scheduled work time. HPL Cares helps to schedule staff, assist with Hillsboro Helps paperwork, and organize ride sharing options in order to ease staff participation in volunteer events.

We Care

As the HPL Cares team continues to expand the supportive reach of the library throughout Hillsboro, the team also pursues ways to assist staff as they serve the many diverse groups of people converging within the library. As the population continues to grow and rental costs quickly increase, Hillsboro has experienced an uptick in citizens struggling with housing insecurity. As a welcome space for everyone, Hillsboro Public Library invites all people to utilize library services. Library staff members find themselves spending an increased amount of time helping connect houseless patrons with support services located throughout the city. At times, staff struggle to connect patrons with agencies that are stretched beyond their capacity. Staff members have expressed not only their frustration, but also their desire to do more for library visitors. In response, the HPL Cares team devised a plan to solicit donations from patrons and staff to help create Care Kits. Care Kits include small snacks,



HPL staff at the Adelante Mujeres veggie packing night in support of local CSA programs.





Cindy York,
Crook County Library



A giving tree near the library entrance with gift suggestions to support the Harkins House holiday gift drive.

personal hygiene products, socks and information about available Washington County social services. As staff interacts with or assists a patron who openly shares their struggle to find housing, wash their clothes, take a shower, find a hot meal, etc., staff are able to offer minor relief with a Care Kit prepared by the HPL Cares team. The Care Kits have become a tool, assisting staff as they navigate tough patron interactions. The scope of library work does not always allow us to assist patrons to the extent that we would like, but the Care Kits provide staff the opportunity to build trusted relationships with patrons and discreetly say “We Care.”

This team of compassion-driven leaders has mobilized hundreds of Hillsboro residents to donate their time and money to causes that directly give back to their community. As they work to spread their mission, the potential for growth is limitless. Through coordinated acts of civic engagement, HPL Cares has helped Hillsboro residents recognize the library as an even more involved presence in the community. Going forward, the team plans to create a community involvement corner at both library locations where patrons can easily find

information about Hillsboro-based community service organizations, as well as volunteer opportunities throughout the city. The community involvement corner will take over a section of the community information bulletin board providing easy access to community service information for patrons. The team is working to expand patron participation in the quarterly staff service projects through targeted advertisements (social media, library website, event calendars, and in-library displays). The team would also like to partner with HPL’s Teen Library Council to generate ideas for future service projects and mentor teen counselors as they develop service leadership skills. HPL Cares is privileged to continue cultivating a culture of community involvement within the library and beyond. This team embodies the true spirit of leadership: partnering, supporting and caring. 🐾



Stepping Up:

Applying Situational Leadership Concepts to Public Library Work With Teens

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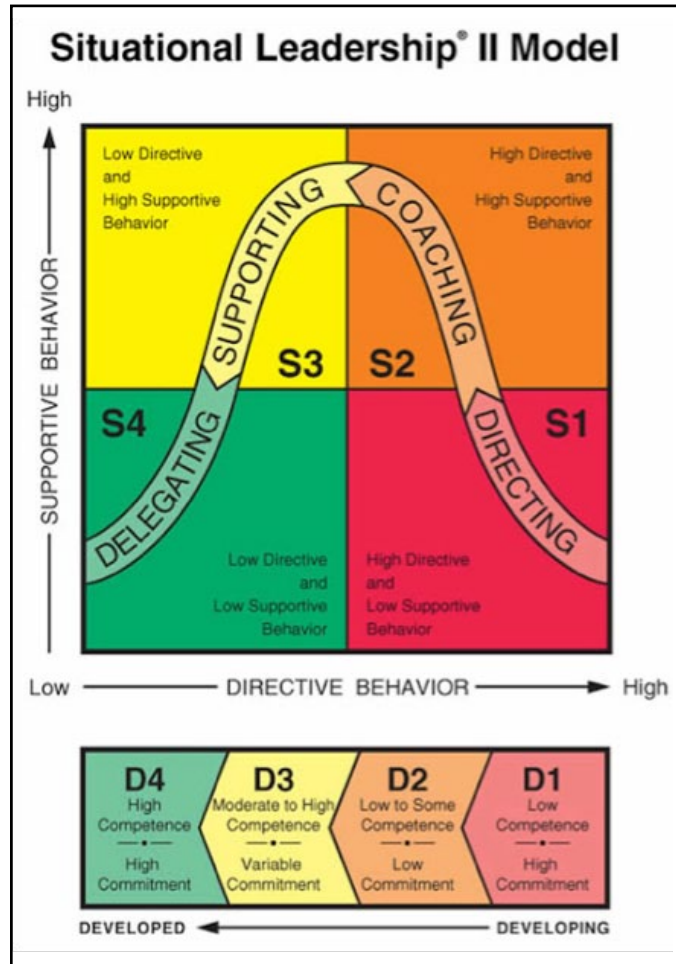
MARK RICHARDSON is a Reference and Young Adult Librarian at the Cedar Mill & Bethany Community Libraries in Portland. He has worked there since 2004 and been a member of OLA for most of that time. He was Chair of the Oregon Young Adult Network in 2013–2014 and served on the OLA board during that time. He has his MLS from Emporia State University. Mark enjoys walking his dog, reading, playing guitar, trivia, karaoke and playing games with family and friends.

Working with teens is fun, nerve-wracking, and never dull. After building and growing a thriving teen council at our library for nearly ten years, I've spent some time thinking about what I want teens to get out of their experience at the library. One of the big things that they need and want is to develop leadership skills. Every application for college or scholarships seems to ask how they are demonstrating leadership, so I decided several years ago that I would build in opportunities for them to develop these skills on the council. This has taken the form of them leading meetings, splitting up into smaller groups lead by a teen leader, and taking on other, more advanced responsibilities. After learning a bit more about the Situational Leadership model at the Leadership Institute of the Oregon Library Association (LIOLA) conference, I am able to see the times when council members have demonstrated or responded to leadership behaviors described in the model. This article will look at some of these instances and discuss how teaching teens about this model might strengthen their own leadership abilities.

So what is Situational Leadership? It is a model/process developed by Ken Blanchard and Paul Hersey 50 years ago designed to help leaders get the best work out of people based on the situation. The model changed significantly as Blanchard (2001) developed it further with Situational Leadership II. This model describes four development levels that people can be in when trying to accomplish something. These levels are defined by a person's competence and commitment on a specific task. You can have high or low competence and commitment depending on variables like how much training you have or how new the task is to you. We all go through this every day, in our work lives in particular. The goal is to get people from a developing state to a developed state where they need little direction and little support on a given task.

In response to these development levels, leaders can impact others' development by being directive, supportive or some combination of the two. Directive behaviors improve a person's competence while Supportive behaviors impact their commitment. High or low Directive and Supportive behaviors create four distinct leadership styles. These four leadership styles are called Directing, Coaching, Supporting and Delegating. (Blanchard, 2001, p.10). Most leaders are comfortable working with one or two of these leadership





This diagram describes the different stages of situational leadership and what sort of inputs a manager might give depending on which stage the workers or volunteers are in (Blanchard, 2001, p.4).

styles, very few exhibit all four. To be effective, a leader needs to use all styles and match them to the task or situation (Blanchard, 2001, p.13).

It was eye-opening to learn about these four styles and to think about our teen library council. I started our library’s teen council in 2009 and it’s been one of the great joys of my professional life to see so many great kids join the council as young teens and blossom into competent adults by the time they leave as seniors. The structure of the council has evolved from the beginning, as I have sought to put more power into the hands of the teens so that they could directly impact the library and how we offer services to teens. Yet encouraging them to be leaders and take more responsibility is tricky. You can tell them to be leaders, but what does that mean? Is it just telling other teens what to do? Is it planning? Is it goal-setting? Is it motivating others? All of those things? None of them?

When I look at the four leadership styles closely, I recognize using some of these styles to coach and teach the teens leadership techniques. The first style, Directing, is used whenever one trains a new person or teaches a new skill. Whenever teens are helping me with a program, I’m usually directing, particularly with someone who is new. Showing





Mark Richardson,
Cedar Mill & Bethany Community Libraries

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them what to vacuum, how to clean tables, set up video game consoles, and other things is fundamental to programming. It's rewarding when they start anticipating what needs to be done and they start doing it. If the ultimate goal is to create autonomous people who have high commitment and high competence, it starts with teaching the fundamentals.

The second style is Coaching. This style is still directive, but more time is given to explaining our goals and why we have them. Input is requested and integrated into plans when possible. The teen council is frequently asked for input on planning programs and how to best market to their peers. They will plan their own programs and have to make important decisions about what happens during a program, what to buy and where to promote so that other teens will come. This is a time when the teens need a lot of support as they are often not sure what to do and interest wanes. Asking questions is important in the effort to get them thinking about what to do next. This often leads to the third leadership style, Supporting.

In the Supporting phase (which is honestly where I'm most comfortable), I am trying to get the teens to make decisions on their own without as much help from me. Blanchard (2001) states, "a leader using Style 3 listens, encourages, and facilitates self-reliant decision making and problem solving" (p.10). For example, last year, a teen running our Anime Club was encouraged to make decisions about what we would do in the meeting. She stepped up to the challenge and, week after week, decided more of the content for the club. She made prizes, came up with quizzes, found video clips to watch and developed themes for each meeting. She got more and more confident and capable with each meeting. She was rewarded with a solid core group of club members who enjoyed the knowledge she was sharing with them. It was a win-win scenario.

In the last leadership style, Delegating, people are empowered to act independently with less input from the leader. The teen leading the Anime Club is approaching this level of independence. The members of our book group have a lot of autonomy to write book reviews and decide what material we put on the teen part of our website. That being said, it is hard to imagine many scenarios where I can let the teens assume this much autonomy for a volunteer position that only meets once a month. Yet, the best teen councils approach this level of leadership from their teens. Teen councils in Salem and Tualatin plan and implement giant programs like a full fledged haunted house and a nine hole mini golf course in the library. These are pretty advanced activities.

Looking at the Situational Leadership model has helped me identify ongoing problems in how the teen council operates. It also suggests potential remedies. With 20 teen council members, I've had to break the group into smaller teams like the program group, book group and film group, and each team has its own leader. I have observed these teens engaging in directive behaviors. The problem with this is that there is usually no follow through. In order for the Directing style to be effective, there needs to be checking, monitoring, and feedback. Teens are not usually comfortable giving feedback to their peers. If the job doesn't get done, the leader will take over and do the job for their peer. This is one of the main areas that I've had to coach our teen leaders about. They have to trust that their peers are going to do the job and they have to let them do it. Developing that level of trust is hard, particularly if someone doesn't follow through. Knowing about the four leadership styles will help me put structure around these conversations that I have been having with teens for years. Coaching and delegating have a different meaning now. I've often told teen leaders that they have to delegate tasks to their teammates. Knowing that





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delegation involves a high level of trust, it might be better to teach them about coaching and supporting before I start talking about delegation.

The model also values feedback at each level. That is something of which we need to do more. In the past, our groups will take a little time to discuss how things went, but usually they just move on to the next project. Our program group does the best with assessing their progress because they have projects that have immediate feedback. They plan a program, do the program, and then evaluate it. They see how many people came. They know what worked and what could be improved. Yet, there is more feedback they could gather. They can ask participants how they heard about the event or if most participants are from a particular school. They could ask participants at the end of an event what worked and what didn't. Last year we did escape rooms and an Amazing Race event. Asking the participants at the end what was fun and what was too hard would have been great feedback to get. I will encourage them to look for ways to gain this knowledge in the future.

Our book and film groups have a harder time collecting feedback about how they are doing. Our film group produces videos and photos for the library website and social media. In general, they move from project to project without evaluating how each video did. Showing them the social media statistics and encouraging them to set specific goals around viewership numbers are ways I could help them. Our book group produces numerous book reviews every year. They do a great job getting the reviews written and posted, but there is little assessment about what they want to accomplish. Do they want to get people to read these books? Read the reviews? Take some other action? This year, they intend to record a book discussion podcast. I am excited about this, but I also want them to think about what their goals are. Is it just to produce and publish a podcast? They will gain great skills doing this, but I want them to think about how it will benefit other teens, too. In looking at the Situational Leadership model, I can see that they will need to learn a lot about podcasting. They are in a high-commitment state (excited), but also low competence—the D1 or Developing level in regards to this skill. They will need some directing. Unfortunately, I may not have the skills or time to give to them. I have done some podcasts for the library in the past, so I can get them started. But I think they could benefit from some outside help as well, so I may see if there is an experienced podcaster who can give them some pointers. I will encourage them to have goals around how to get people to listen to the podcast, too.

My intention this fall is to share the Situational Leadership model with the teen leaders and possibly the larger group. I will encourage them to be more explicit about what we want to accomplish, figure out how to measure it, and do a better job with them of collecting and evaluating feedback about if they are reaching their goals. I always tell them that my number one goal for the group is for them to have fun. Adding these tools that will allow them to develop leadership skills while continuing to have fun may be the biggest challenge for the group this year. I am confident in their fun-making abilities though, so I think they are up to the task. 🌀

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Overcoming Isolation as a Form of Leadership

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Working in the technical services department of a small academic library is a bit of an isolation double-whammy: not only are you more removed from the patrons you serve than are your public-facing counterparts, you may also be a department of one and solely responsible for discharging a highly specialized set of duties. This has been the case for me since 2015 when I moved to Oregon after accepting the position of Acquisitions Specialist at Pacific University, a small, private, liberal arts college in Forest Grove. I am primarily responsible for tracking the library's resource funds; overseeing the ordering, receiving, and invoicing process for all newly acquired materials; and aiming for the ever-moving target that is continuations budgeting.

Prior to this position, I had mainly worked for larger institutions with more staff members who had the same or overlapping responsibilities. Over the past few years at Pacific, I have had to train myself in conquering the inherent isolation associated with my work. I've found that this has brought out leadership qualities I did not know I possessed, and I have identified a few ways in which I have been able to harness and hone these newfound skills.

Before starting in this role, I would have said that working independently was one of the benefits of a role in a small technical services department; because I am a relatively shy, introverted individual, the idea of being able to help and serve my community from afar is absolutely part of the appeal of acquisitions. However, I began to realize that it's harder to stay grounded in the "why" of librarianship if you are a few steps removed from your patrons. I needed to find a way to elevate and add purpose to my day-to-day work. I achieved this by re-examining and envisioning who my library community is more expansively and inclusively, cultivating and embracing my own areas of expertise, and grounding myself in my own personal and professional values.

An important realization for any early-career librarian to have is that a library's community is larger than just its patron base. I began the process of redefining what serving my community could mean by reaching outside of my immediate institutional network and engaging with my peers at the consortial level. The Orbis Cascade Alliance—the first library consortium of which I have been a part—seemed like a logical and manageable first step into widening my network. After attending and making a few connections at the 2015





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Alliance Summer Meeting, I volunteered to serve on two Alliance working groups. This was a large step for me, especially because I was quite new to my position and the Alliance, and therefore not very familiar with the issue we were tasked with tackling. Nevertheless, at the following Alliance Summer Meeting, I was presenting on behalf of our group to the rest of our peers on procedures for loading records into our shared catalog, a process I knew virtually nothing about just a year before.

Shortly after this, I found myself responding more to listserv questions related to acquisitions. The Orbis Cascade Alliance was the first consortium to adopt Ex Libris' new flagship product, Alma, as its shared ILS starting in 2013. Not only does Alma have a bit of a learning curve, but Ex Libris' software developers continue to build it beneath us as we use it, which can throw a wrench into established workflows with each monthly update. Having been introduced to acquisitions at my previous institution—also an early adopter of Alma—I happened to come into librarianship in time to learn everything I know about acquisitions within this up-and-coming, cloud-based ILS. As more academic libraries migrated to Alma and as I moved to the Alliance's shared Alma environment from my previous institution's independent one, I was uniquely positioned to help my fellow acquisitions librarians as their institutions migrated to Alma. I felt as though having experience with two very different acquisitions configurations within a unique ILS relatively early in the game afforded me a perspective few others had at the time.

The combination of being an Alma acquisitions native and seizing the opportunities provided by the Alliance to increase my knowledge through collaboration with my colleagues coalesced into a spike in professional confidence. This in turn led to an increase in my engagement with my fellow acquisitions librarians, and I came to realize that leadership opportunities can lie within one's areas of expertise. Although I don't consider myself an expert in anything, through my interactions with my peers I've inadvertently perpetuated a positive feedback loop whereby offering solutions or training to others begets confidence, which then inspires me to reach out in support more often.

One of the more vibrant memories I have of this phenomenon started when I was asked by my supervisor to accompany her to help train a new member library of the Alliance, Clackamas Community College, in Alma acquisitions just prior to their go-live date. Up until this point, the vast majority of my correspondence with fellow acquisitions librarians had been confined to off-list replies to questions posed on listservs. Being face-to-face with my colleagues to answer questions in real time and guide them through the processes without having to rely on e-mails and screenshots was a turning point for me. There is a great deal of value in making human connections, and this is what I had been missing with my position's inherent distance from my more traditional patron base.

My experience with my colleagues at Clackamas Community College cemented my enthusiasm for this kind of "meta-librarianship;" as I continue to establish my career, my past successes with being a useful resource for my fellow librarians will continue to fuel my passion for supporting them. In fact, at the time of this writing, I have invited a new-to-acquisitions librarian to come spend a day with me at Pacific's Tim and Cathy Tran Library so I can guide her through her transition, impart what she needs to know to be successful, and offer her the support she needs as she shoulders an entirely new set of responsibilities single-handedly—a feeling with which I am familiar and can empathize.





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Librarianship is a highly service-oriented profession, and both my professional and personal values center around this axiom. Although my position exists to serve and support the patrons of the Pacific University Libraries, I've found some of my most fulfilling work to be serving and supporting my peers. I derive a lot of satisfaction from being a resource people can turn to, but I also don't put an inordinate amount of pressure on myself to know everything. Maintaining a network of reliable contacts for areas in which you are not an expert is vital; my customer service background has taught me that if you are helping someone and don't know the answer to their question, it is your responsibility to find and direct them to someone who does. Just as I endeavor to be a good steward of my library's resources, I also place a high value on sharing what I have learned to help lift up those around me so that we may all be successful.

My advice to librarians of all stripes, but particularly those in positions that have the potential to be isolating, would first be to redefine and find creative ways to get involved with the community you serve. Sign up for working groups and committees, even if you aren't sure whether you belong; although you may not contribute much the first time, you'll be more knowledgeable and prepared for the next opportunity. Then, as you become more confident in your knowledge and abilities, seek out and seize opportunities to use what you know to help both your patrons and your colleagues. Finally, endeavor to make what you do on a day-to-day basis align with your notion of what librarianship ought to be. There is space for all of us to contribute to our profession and grow our leadership abilities.

If I could distill all my thoughts on harnessing one's leadership potential in whatever space you occupy within the diverse arena of librarianship, it would ultimately come down to this: Isolation and imposter-syndrome can work together to become a very real confidence-wrecking force. Although it may be unconventional, when in doubt just follow this classic piece of advice: fake it 'til you make it. And maybe you'll find that you were never faking it after all. 🐘



Building the Ladder:

Developing Leadership Skills Without the Title

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MELISSA LITTLE is the Circulation Manager for the Beaverton City Libraries. She started her professional life in social work. She then moved to bookstore management for ten years. Finally, seeing a profession that combined her love of lifelong learning with service to the community, she sought a career in libraries. Her first job was working on the bookmobile at the Anaheim (CA) Public Library. From there she became the Assistant Manager of Circulation and Customer Service at Palos Verdes (CA) Library District. After receiving her MLIS from San Jose State University, she secured her current position as Circulation Manager at the Beaverton City Library. In her spare time she loves exploring the beautiful Pacific Northwest, crafting, and reading.

The leap to library leadership can be difficult if you have no experience in supervision. While larger library systems may have a deep structure that allows employees to start on step one of the ladder and progress one rung at a time to that director position, most of us in Oregon work for smaller libraries where there are few or no successive steps between circulation clerk and director. In these types of organizations, how does someone gain the experience necessary to make one a viable candidate for the job? Because of the diversity of functions from library to library and position to position, experience with a specific set of tasks really does not assess someone's success in a job. The viable candidate, especially in supervisory positions, does not necessarily have a specific operational skill set as much as a set of characteristics that will help one succeed as a leader.

There is a distinction between management and leadership. While both are necessary, management tends to focus on hard skills while leadership is more about the soft skills. Leadership establishes a direction for the organization by creating a vision, by aligning people to the vision through superb communication and team-building skills, and by motivating and inspiring the team to follow the vision (Kotter, 2008). Managers plan and budget, establish rules and procedures, develop incentives, and take corrective action. John Kotter (2008) separated the two in this way: management produces order and consistency; leadership produces change and movement. While libraries tend to value order and consistency, those individuals who can produce change and movement will be of the most value to the 21st-century library.

For this reason, one of the most important character traits of strong leaders is adaptability. In 1998 Beloit College began compiling the Mindset List to highlight the differences in the experiences of contemporary college freshmen compared to those of their predecessors. The most recent for the class of 2021, the last class to be born in the 20th-century, points out that this class:





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“... can't remember when a “phone” wasn't a video game and research library. ... They have persevered in a world without Joe DiMaggio and brightened by emojis ... If you ask them about the whine of a dial-up modem, expect a blank stare.” (McBride, Nief, & Westerberg, 2018)

When you review these Mindset Lists over the years, the changes to our culture and the methods by which society seeks information become starkly apparent. Consequently, organizations that want to keep pace with the rapidity of change will seek out leaders who not only can keep up with those changes but help others to do the same. When a supervisor wants to help their team work through a change, they always seek allies to help them ease the rest of the group through the transition. Being an ally to change in the organization allows one to model leadership for their team and demonstrates adaptability to their supervisors. If, for example, your library is adopting a new ILS or other software that will impact how staff provides services, offer to be part of (or better yet coordinate) a group of users to work through the kinks, create training documents, and assist co-workers in learning the new system. If changes will impact your patrons, develop talking points for your team to help them explain the need for change. These actions will demonstrate to your supervisor that not only do you adapt well, but that you acknowledge that others may not be as comfortable with change and that you have the ability to assist others through the transition.

The examples above involve another characteristic of great leaders: initiative. Shannon Schreiber Associates, in their *Leading from Any Position* workshop, do an exercise that brings home this idea to participants. In it, people are asked to think about things they personally can do to improve their organization in various ways (e.g. improve efficiency, cut a cost). Those with a leadership mindset think in this way while the majority wait for someone else to improve the situation. Rather than going to your supervisor and complaining that you never have the supplies you need at the service desk, step up and create an inventory of everything needed to give great patron service at the desk. Once finished, present it to your supervisor, and offer to be the person who ensures those items are there. Rather than complaining to your co-workers about how your library destroys the environment with paper waste, make a list of ways to save paper and share it with your director. While you may not work in an organization where you can take the initiative to create new programs or services, even simple things that take ownership of a problem rather than push it off to management demonstrate your willingness to lead.

Strong advocacy skills are another quality desired in leaders. The benefits of strong library advocates were evident when federal funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) was restored in the last two budget cycles after initially being removed. Advocacy skills can be practiced no matter what role you currently play in your organization. Develop an elevator pitch. When someone asks about library relevance in the digital age, dazzle them with a story or two about how your library has transformed members of the community. Attend budget meetings, learn about the process for funding your institution, and learn about your legislators. If the politicians controlling your





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funding have a pet cause, help them make the connection to that cause. Learn about your community's needs and advocate for the creation of programs that fill those needs.

Successful leaders exhibit another trait: a desire to learn and grow. Great leaders help to create a learning culture and model that curiosity to learn. As stated earlier, libraries vary widely on the skills necessary to complete the daily work. In order to successfully move up the ranks, a willingness to learn new things will almost always ensure your value to your organization. Seek out training in areas where there might be a deficit in your organization. Would grant writing skills be helpful? Maybe website development skills would be beneficial? There are a multitude of resources available for learning new skills and many of them at no charge. For example, www.webjunction.org compiles a monthly list of free webinars of interest to library staff. This source is just one of many available. If you are lucky enough to work for an organization with a training budget or reimbursement for staff to take courses, take advantage of those resources to develop skills that you may not get a chance to learn in your current role. Once you have completed your learning, find methods to put it into practice. Offer to take on a project that will use your new skills.

While these characteristics will help you get recognized in your own organization as someone destined for leadership, you may need to look outside your organization for promotional opportunities. Proving you are an appropriate candidate for a position may be tougher. While forward-thinking organizations know that leadership qualities are more elusive and management skills can be trained, many in charge of hiring focus on task expertise or previous job titles or duties. In addition to using your current job to develop the traits sought by hiring managers, look for other opportunities to get the experiences you seek. As libraries see the benefit to patrons in developing relationships with other service organizations, becoming a member of one of those organizations is a great way to not only establish a partnership but to also get experiences that are possibly not available in your current job. Additionally, the Oregon Library Association offers many opportunities to develop management and leadership skills. Becoming active in a division, committee, or round table allows for the attainment of experience frequently sought by hiring managers. By going a step further and chairing a group, you expand your skill set even more.

In addition to developing skills through these outside interests, you will develop a network to assist you in finding that next-level position you seek. OLA especially can help you meet leaders within the library community who can give you advice and mentorship. You will learn more about other institutions and gain some understanding of which organizations strictly require job experience and where your competencies fit best.

When you begin seeking new job opportunities, a functional resume will be the best method to showcase the hard skills the employer seeks. Unlike a chronological resume which lists job titles and duties of the job, a functional resume focuses on your skills and experiences. It highlights those accomplishments achieved due to an ambition to be a leader. While you can list your job title and description, you can also highlight special projects accomplished for that organization. In addition to noting your involvement in





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OLA or other service organizations, detail what accomplishments you had, committees on which you served, or initiatives which you led. Additionally, a cover letter that explains how your combination of management and leadership traits meets the needs of the hiring organization will help them to connect the dots. Furthermore, take the time to learn about the organization and tailor each resume and cover letter to showcase the skills that most closely match the needs of that particular organization. If you can connect with a current employee to get more information about the organization and culture, do so.

Often the road to leadership can seem long, winding, and without guideposts. However, there is a truism which, paraphrased, applies: leadership is a journey, not a destination. Seek out professional experiences that will enrich your life as well as your resume. Develop working relationships that will not only help your career, but will also bring you enjoyment. Understand that developing adaptability and resiliency will not only strengthen you as a leader, but brings along with it greater contentment. 🌀

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Followership, or Leading Up in Libraries in Brief

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Introduction

In a recent Green Future pamphlet from Portland Gas and Electric, there is a statement above a list of businesses that choose clean wind power: “We’d like to thank the following. Or rather, the leading.” This quote sums up what this article is about. Leadership, and the capacity to lead, comes from being an effective follower and having effective followers. While many may think of sheep when they hear the word follower, that can be far from the truth.

In the 2008 text, *The Art of Followership*, Chaleff, Riggio, and Lippman-Blumen lay out five traits of effective followers: courage to assume responsibility, courage to serve, courage to challenge, courage to participate, and courage to take moral action. In his 2015 text, *Followership: What It Takes to Lead*, James Schindler lists four attributes that successful followership is built on: belief in the mission, willingness to work toward the good of the whole, loyalty, and unity of focus. Authenticity also plays a part in both leadership and followership. As a follower, being authentic can help a person be intentional and help them guide leadership with confidence (Schindler, 2015). Leaders do not have all the power (Kean and Haycock-Stuart, 2011). One needs followers to lead.

In addition to articles and books on followership, the internet also has many lists of traits of effective followers. These include integrity, active engagement, reciprocity (Bell, 2018), enthusiasm, emotional awareness (McCouston, 2018), honesty, courage, and judgment (McCallum, 2018). Here we will focus on three of the traits that can be found on many such lists. This is not an exhaustive list.

The areas of confidence, presence, and influence are areas both leaders and followers can use to shape and move an organization. Followership in general is a business-based concept. While the library business is not the business these authors write about, many of the principles transfer between worlds. The literature discussed so far is business literature, the following section will focus more on how these concepts transfer into libraries and information professions.





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Confidence

Kean and Haycock-Stuart (2011) found through interviews with nurses that following occurred when there was trust and faith in a leader. Followers who are open to leaders and have confidence in their leadership are more open to these traits.

When I was working on my MLIS at Louisiana State University, I was also employed full-time at Middleton Library. I went to my first American Library Association Annual Conference one summer and came back brimming with ideas for this project or that. One project that I brought up to my supervisor was cleaning and shifting the reference stacks. My supervisor at the time, Melanie Sims, supported the idea. Her support gave me the confidence to build a plan. My plan involved a budget for a vacuum and labor. These too were supported, and by the end of the summer the reference shelves were cleaned, and the books were cleaned and shifted.

- Confidence in yourself, your ideas, and in being able to effectively follow;
- Confidence that leadership will support you;
- Confidence in the mission and goals the team is working toward.

Presence

Presence is both in the way one carries oneself and in simply being present and discoverable. Much like the materials a library offers, if the leadership does not see or is not able to find a follower, they do not get used.

“Stick around. I might need you.” In a recent conversation with my mother-in-law, she said her father used to tell her this when she was a kid. She followed up that this later helped her as a nurse—waiting, being present, and observing to see what she could do that would be useful.

Currently, I work with a person who attends meetings of interest. This serves two purposes for her. First, she knows what is going on at the university. She is aware of current initiatives, directions, and she speaks her mind when she sees a place where she can help out. Second, because she is present and because she speaks up, other people outside the library know her and think of her and the library for certain projects.

- Presence to stay tuned to the needs of the organization, the mission, and to tie back to the greater professional world;
- Awareness of one’s self and one’s presence;
- Be present, speak your ideas and contribute.

Influence

Confidence and presence will help to build influence. Build influence to not only influence the direction of an organization, but to influence the tools available and the mode of getting to the greater strategic goals.

Conclusion for Followers

There is an ever-growing body of literature on followership. This article is not meant to be a literature review or even a comprehensive look into the topic. It is a how-to. Take away from the article some tips to help influence leaders and organizations, and to lead from the front lines even when it is not necessarily a leadership position. Be authentic to yourself and to your leaders. Be open, and have confidence that you will be and should be heard. For those who do not naturally come by these skills, cultivate them. Go into an open meeting that





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you may not normally attend and listen. If you have thoughts or ideas on the subject, share them. This will build presence. The more those ideas are adapted or supported, the more confidence will be built, and the more influence your words and actions will begin to have.

Conclusion for Leaders

Leaders can cultivate strong followers. Provide clear goals that everyone has opportunities to provide input. Allow autonomy to followers to figure out their own way of supporting the goals and the vision. This can lead to innovative and different ways of getting to the goal. Be open to followers having a different perspective, and a different method. Finally, support followers. Find out what they need to accomplish the goals and get that for them. This does come with budget and other constraints a leader may face. No one expects the moon. However, support and appreciation go a long way in accomplishing the goals and reaching toward the vision of the library.

There is much more literature available on followership than what is covered here. However, instead of a thorough literature review, readers can contemplate their own actions as followers, and those of the people with whom they have worked. What is most effective in your work, and with your leadership? If you are the leader, what can you do to support and cultivate these types of traits in those that you work with? 🐼

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