December 2007

Case Studies in Collection and Technical Services -- Case Study Seven: A New Employee -- What Do I Do?

Anne Langley
Duke University, anne.langley@duke.edu

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Recommended Citation
Langley, Anne (2007) "Case Studies in Collection and Technical Services -- Case Study Seven: A New Employee -- What Do I Do?,” Against the Grain: Vol. 19: Iss. 6, Article 36.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.5349

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Edward was fascinated by all the many facets of his new job as a supervisor in the library digital production center. Being a beginning manager was lots of fun and super challenging. He had learned so much in such a short time, especially since he had to quickly hire a few staff people. Now the first of the new hires was to begin working in a week or so and Edward realized he had no idea how to prepare for her arrival, nor what to do once she started. “Argh!” he thought to himself as he headed out to lunch with his friend Elaine, assistant head of the library acquisitions department, as he realized that for a first time supervisor, he still had a lot to learn.

Over their Cobb salads, Elaine and Edward chatted a bit about work, and then Edward brought up his new challenge: the new employee; what ought he be doing? Elaine admitted that her department head usually handled the hiring, training, etc. so she had no idea. But she did suggest contacting the Library Human Resources Department as an initial move. After eating, they head back to the library, and Edward began to really think hard about planning for his new employee. He figured there were lots of little details to take care of, but where to begin?

The University of Virginia hosted this exhibit comprised from the Brenda Foreman collection of post cards, flat slats, pull tabs and pop-ups. A nice selection of Dean and Sons books are discussed as well as the well known artist Lothar Meggendorfer. High quality scanned images are available along with several that the visitor can move, through the use of a Quicktime movie, 180 degrees. This is an impressive collection dating back to the 1880’s.

The Pop-up World of Ann Montanaro — http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/libs/scua/montanar/p-ex.htm

Author of an extensive bibliography on pop-up books, Ann Montanaro also hosts a Website dedicated to her pop-up and moveable book collection. A concise history is provided along with a supporting bibliography. Montanaro does an exceptional job describing not only the physical books but also their moving components and often includes the gist of the story as well.

The photos are high quality and instead of the usual chronological order, Montanaro presents her collection by subject.

Case Studies in Collection and Technical Services

Case Study Seven: A New Employee — What Do I Do?

Column Editor: Anne Langley (Coordinator for Public Services Assessment and Chemistry Librarian, Duke University; Phone: 919-660-1578) <anne.langley@duke.edu>

The Experts Speak:

What a new employee experiences on her first day/week/month/year on the job can have a profound effect on how well she will function at work. As with many situations, one of the best, most thorough and service oriented ways to approach solving any problem, is to put yourself in the shoes of the person who will be affected by your actions. So, given that, what would be the ideal work situation to walk into? Let’s take a peek into the perfect first day, first week, first month, and beyond for the ideal new employee: 

On the ideal first day of work you have your own desk, chair, basic supplies, phone and a computer. You have an email account, passwords to all the systems and programs you may need. You have keys to what you need to have keys to (office, building, desk, filing cabinet, etc.), a parking place, and you know where the nearest restroom is. And you have lunch buddies, or maybe just your new boss, to take you out to eat and make you feel welcome right away. As well, you are given time on your own to sit in your chair and adjust it, explore the drawers, find some good pens in the supply cabinet, etc. Yet, you may notice you need right away from the supply catalog, call a friend to tell them how excited you are at your new job, and finally look over the library Website(s): internal and external, departmental (yours and others), institutional (especially the human resources site), and then receive and send some emails. Best case is if you receive an email sent to the rest of the library staff by your supervisor welcoming you and introducing you to them and inviting them to send you an email at <your.name@library.edu>. Yay, you feel so welcome and ready to work!

So far, if Edward takes almost all of the nouns in the above paragraph and makes a checklist out of them, then proceeds to acquire or provide for all of them he will have built an excellent foundation for his new employee’s first day.

Now what next? We have the first day covered, what about the first week?

Second day of work through the end of the first week you meet in-person not only the people you will be working most closely with, but also you know where every other department in the building is, and have met everyone who was at their desk when your boss gave you a tour. You also have an organization chart and a phone list (or you know where to find one on the Web now) so that those you haven’t met yet, you know if and how to contact them as the case arises. You have been to the library Human Resources department and you have been given information about all your benefits, and the institutional work rules. As well, you continued on page 84

(In re Literary Works in Elec. Databases Copyright Litig.),

by William M. Hannay (Partner, Schiff Hardin LLP, Adjunct Professor, IIT/Chicago-Kent Law School)

If you have been a freelance writer for a few years, you’re probably crying in your beer (or perhaps your caffeine-free herbal tea) about the recent decision of the U.S. Court of Appeals in New York tossing out a hard-won settlement between writers and publishers. Here’s the story.

Almost a decade ago, groups of freelance writers launched copyright lawsuits against print publications (such as newspapers and magazines) over the use of the writers’ works in electronic databases (such as LEXIS/NEXIS). For years before the age of electronic delivery of literary content dawned, it was industry practice for freelance writers to sell their works to publications without a written contract. The simple custom was that, for a fee paid to the author, the author granted to the publisher the first right to publish the work in a specified edition of the newspaper or magazine, but in all other respects the author retained copyright ownership to the work.

By the 1980s, as electronic databases became more prevalent, print publishers found a new source of revenue by entering into license agreements with database companies, authorizing them to copy and resell the text of back issues of the newspapers and magazines, which included articles written by freelance contributors. Rightly or wrongly, the print publications did not obtain written permission from their freelancers for this subsequent publication of their works on the electronic databases. Maybe the publishers believed they didn’t have to obtain such permission; maybe they just ignored the question. (Articles written by the publications’ staff writers are works “made for hire” and thus are the property of the employer.)

In the mid-1990s, a handful of writers sued the New York Times, Newsday, and Time Inc. over the practice. The case inched its way through the court system and, after an initial loss at the trial court level, resulted in a 1999 victory for the writers before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in New York. The decision electrified the writing community.

Groups of freelancers as well as a number of associations of writers (such as the Authors Guild, Inc., the National Writers Union, and the American Society of Journalists and Authors) filed several class action lawsuits, alleging that the databases and print publications continued on page 85