April 2007

Back Talk -- Incredible Edible India and Change Management

Anthony (Tony) W. Ferguson
University of Hong Kong, ferguson@hkucc.hku.hk

Follow this and additional works at: https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg

 Part of the Library and Information Science Commons

think I should have borrowed a tactic employed at Columbia to help staff working in the Main Library endure ten plus years of its floor by floor renovation process. Floor by floor we had to move out of the way of the builders and then move into the new area. Some people moved more than once. You can imagine the chaos that we had to deal with during these many years. To keep everyone from going crazy, they produced a monthly newsletter that did three things: it gave us information on what was happening to us (fulfilling one of the basic needs that we all have), it helped clarify what could be expected in the near and more distant futures and it gave us a feeling that while we had to endure many inconveniences, a better day was coming (helping us deal with the difficulties of the loss curve and giving us realistic expectations of what was to come), and it helped us avoid thinking that this process would never end (helping us to fight off irrational fears that since we couldn't get our work done, our performance evaluations would be terrible and we would lose our jobs and we would have to move in with our parents once again).

Change, like cooperation, is a bit of an unnatural act. But I think paying more attention to these five factors can help a lot. I hope to do better next time. 🐾

Endnotes
1. Team Technology. Change Management: Five Basic Principles and How to Apply Them. *http://www.teamtechnology. co.uk/changemanagement.html*

Places and Events were set up on the **Flickr** Website in January 2006. Images loaded into these groups are harvested on a weekly basis into the **National Library**'s collection. Over a thousand images are being harvested each month. A third example concerns the use of **Web 2.0** technologies to further the library's instructional mission. A good instance of this may be found at **Washington State University**. The library recently released its first tutorial podcast. It is a downloadable mp3 file that discusses search strategies on the library's information gateway. For students unwilling or unable to come to the library for an in-person lesson, this provides the next best thing.

Another way that libraries can play effectively in the **2.0** space is to go where the action is. Lock into step with patrons' current Web behaviors. One obvious example of this is tighter integration with the university portal and course management systems. If any campuswide community exists within the academy today, it is the course management system. It is thus sensible to expose library services there. What materials on course reading lists are currently available via the library, either physically or with the click of a button? What databases and digital collections are relevant to students

taking Economics 110? For that matter, what books has a patron checked out that might soon be due? Established online communities at which your patrons congregate and interact (such as the course management system) are an opportunity. These pathways can be leveraged as a means of service delivery.

It is, of course, quite likely that by the time we all get up to speed on **Web 2.0**, the world will have moved on to **Web 3.0**. In terms of scholarly communication, I suspect this will mean ever shrinking barriers separating researchers from content, but with a greater success rate in filtering out noise. Today, I can get information at the snap of a finger from a thousand different sources. What I can't do is get only that information that is relevant to me, and nothing else, devoid of false positives and false negatives.

Web 3.0 will see people sharing information, data, content, expertise, and opinions in a way that first and second generation Websites cannot accommodate. This sharing will take the form of rapid peer-to-peer communication,

unvetted by any expert authority *save for my own preset preferences*. Literature services that know I want peer-reviewed articles about macroeconomic policy, but not working papers. I want the latest **Steven Levitt** video diary beamed to my **iPod**, but not my work machine. I want my recently finished presentation posted to the institutional repository, the course management system, my personal page, and the virtual community of professorial presentations simultaneously, with the click of one button. This will be the **3.0** world.

In this reality, the library will play a vital role in guiding patrons through the various opportunities to customize the receipt and exchange of information, ideas, and knowledge. As we all know, faculty are not shy in articulating what they want from us. They are, however, impatient in investing the time and effort necessary to maximize the benefits the library has to offer. Libraries will continue to hold their hands to improve the efficiency of their scholarly communication, from **Web 2.0** to **3.0** and beyond. 🐾

Back Talk — Incredible Edible India and Change Management

Column Editor: **Anthony (Tony) W. Ferguson** (Library Director, University of Hong Kong; Phone: 852 2859 2200; Fax: 852 2858 9420) <ferguson@hkucc.hku.hk>

I just returned from a trip to India. While it was for pleasure, it gave me an opportunity to talk with a good friend **Ramesh Mittal**, a book dealer *http://www.dkagencies.com/*, about life and how to be successful. His father had also worked in the book business and had firmly believed in the power of continuity, of sticking to what works. Along with talking and sightseeing, our two families also did a lot of eating. I went thinking that a week's worth of Indian vegetarianism would help me drop ten pounds or so. Wrong. I returned five pounds heavier.

While looking at all the wonderful ancient sites and eating traditional foods I began to wonder if change was truly important. Yet, I observed that even India is in the midst of redefining itself and there is change everywhere. For example, I found that successful restaurants had adjusted to contemporary demands for good hygiene, beautiful presentation, and good value for price. Indians love sweets and there are shops with refrigerated case after case of desserts prepared in the same ways as they were one hundred years ago. But, in the same shops I found (egg free) Black Forest cakes and Rocky Road ice cream cones. Actually, all of this is just a culinary warm up to talking about CHANGE. Next month I am going to speak at a conference on this topic here in Hong Kong: *http://www.lib.cuhk.edu.hk/conference/aldp2007/index.htm*.

Using **Google** I read a straight forward article on Change Management by a group called Team Technology. They suggest that when trying to manage change we should pay attention to five factors:[1]

1. "Different people react differently to change." Some like it; some don't and become unhappy and resistant to attempts to change them.

2. "Everyone has fundamental needs that have to be met." To some degree or another they want to be in charge of their own lives, to be included in managing the change process, and a desire to know what is happening to them.

3. Change often involves a loss, and people go through the "loss curve." Those who make it all the way through the curve go from "shock" to "anger" to "rejection" to "acceptance" to "healing." Not everyone, though, completes all steps.

4. "Expectations need to be managed realistically." The change agent must insure that the expectations of the person(s) being changed need to be real/true.

5. "Fears have to be dealt with." While the person whose life is being changed might react irrationally, the change agent has to take such feelings seriously and work to allay their fears honestly.

After reading through this list, I quickly decided I should have paid more attention to these factors before coming to Hong Kong — or perhaps becoming a librarian too long ago. Let me illustrate this point by reviewing our decision a few years ago to employ full time instead of part-time selectors.

Different people react differently to change. The decision to employ full time collection developers meant that the whole nature of the collection development enterprise was to change at the University. Some of our staff reacted positively, some with mixed feelings, and others had a hard time for the first few years. For some junior librarians, joining the collection development unit presented a chance to get a much better job and they were excited to participate. For the head of collection development, instead of loosely coor-dinating the efforts of literally two dozen staff members reporting elsewhere, she now needed to directly supervise the activities of a few former colleagues. This was a real change and challenge and she appeared to be both excited by and daunted by the challenges facing her. For the new bibliographers the nature of their work was so different that several of them were initially a bit negative. They were fairly senior staff who had previously supervised units larger than the one they now found themselves working in a subordinate role.

Everyone has fundamental needs, including fears about the future, that need to be addressed. These are areas where we (me) were not always as sensitive to the needs for our new collection development specialists as we should have. While the decision to use full time collection development staff was made top down, they did have some say as to whether to apply for these positions. However, since some were later encouraged to apply, they might have begun to think that they were not in full control of their professional lives. Once they were in place, we started an educational process to teach them what collection developers do. This took the form of a cram course with myself and **David Magier** from Columbia serving as instructors. Yet, once the school term began, they had to sink or swim on the basis of their own abilities. As for the need for information about what was happening in this area, this got set aside since they were "what was happening." The first year was quite difficult for several of these staff members and it was only by the third year that things began to settle down.

Expectations aside and getting through the "loss curve." We tried to give the collection developers a sense of how important their new jobs were and to give them realistic expectations about the rewards that would come their way should they stay the course. We hoped that their new jobs, new titles, and new job descriptions would ease the fears that grew out of the loss of their former positions. For younger staff, immediate feelings of loss were quickly replaced by feelings of gain. But these feelings were not universal by any means. Since the bibliographers were fulfilling completely new jobs in the library, indeed new to all of Hong Kong, it was not initially clear to them just how important their new jobs were in the larger scope of things. For a while they clearly were experiencing feelings of loss. In some cases, this sense of loss was lessened when additional supervisory responsibilities were added to fill critical holes in the organization, giving them some of the more traditional accoutrements of power and importance normally associated with their status in the organization.

While I am not ready to say that we totally failed to show sufficient appreciation for all of these factors, it is very easy to admit that we could have done much better. In retrospect I