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ATG Luminaries — Comment On .. Leadership and Mentoring

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Ane Carriveau

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In my experience, a leader is someone who others want to emulate. Someone who inspires others to do their best and creates opportunities for growth. Someone who shows respect for others. Someone who also learns from those around them and gives their time to the profession. A leader shows a vision for the future and can articulate how to get there.

We find leaders all over libraries. Some are directors or department heads. But often, the truly inspiring leaders are the ones on the frontline who take the risk and try the new thing. They speak about libraries in terms of our communities and not in terms of staff. They build teams based on respect. They learn from others as well as show others the way. They lead through example and not only do other librarians follow them, but so do faculty, staff, community members and civic leaders.

Those local library leaders that develop naturally from the frontline need help to become fully engaged leaders for the profession. They need mentors that will help them when they stumble. Leadership and mentorship are part of a cycle that loops. When done well, the mentor will also learn from the mentee. And being a mentor can be scary. It requires you to open up about your experiences, both your failures and your successes. The best part about having a good mentor is learning from their mistakes, so you don't make them. And then you can be an even better leader and pass those lessons on. 🌱



Galadriel Chilton

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The first job posting describing electronic resource management (ERM) appeared in 1990. Literature citing a shortage of ERM staff came in 2002. Yet currently, only 19% of accredited LIS programs have course descriptions depicting an ERM component. Meanwhile, 73% of ERM jobs posted in Fall 2013 required experience and knowledge. Additionally, conversations with colleagues confirm that the expenditures for, and workload of, e-resources continually increase, while the human resources for ERM remain far from adequate.

We need to eliminate — not just bridge — the delineation between print and electronic that is a digital divide of librarianship. We need an all-encompassing and robust view of collection development in libraries and LIS programs so that the entire library — instead of a few specialists — partakes in the stewardship of all library collections. Libraries must work to comprehensively support this core function including all six of the Techniques for Electronic Resource Management (TERMS): investigation, acquisition (includes licensing), implementation, evaluation, review, and cancellation/replacement. It is also essential to expand ERM knowledge and skills by establishing partnerships between libraries and LIS programs (e.g., create paid resource acquisition and management fellowships). The pool of people with ERM abilities should be a vibrant, growing one, and LIS programs must not bear the yolk of evolving the library.

With most of our materials budgets going towards complex e-collections, the management of these resources must not remain understaffed, but instead be staffed as a core library function. After all, without collections, what is a library? 🌱



Rolf Janke

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As an academic publisher with many miles traveled to academic libraries and conferences, I have had some amazing conversations with several library leaders about the future of the library as well as publishing. But another fascinating theme also emerges, which is they haven't really had any exposure to the basics of the business of publishing. So, I believe this sets the stage for a continuing conversation on the importance for the next generation of library leaders to understand the economics, business models, and legal and ethical aspects of publishing. From open access, copyright law to the pricing scheme behind an eBook collection, the next generation of library leaders needs to be informed. Why do I think this is so important? Because as a publisher, I believe we are moving into very uncertain yet exciting times as key factors to the business such as content, technology, digital literacy, and new economic models all seem to be intersecting which is changing the game on collection development and electronic resource acquisition. An informed new generation of leaders will provide great benefits, not only to their library but to publishers as well in the form of a two-way conversation that could only be a productive one. But how do we (publishers) educate the current library leadership on how to mentor their staff to the significance *and* basics of our business? Beyond the **Charleston Conference** or **ATG**, it really comes down to one conversation at a time. Publishers, spread the word. 🌱



Elizabeth Lightfoot

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A few years ago at a **Charleston Conference** session I found myself sidetracked by the speaker's assertion that Millennials would soon be joining the library profession. I could not stop thinking, "We've been working with you for years. Why haven't you noticed?"

Since then, I have become acutely interested in the culture of, and opportunity for, leadership in our profession. The predicted graying of the profession certainly happened (it was sort of unavoidable). However, the concurrent mass exodus due to retirement certainly did not. How now do we identify, inspire, and develop leaders among new to mid-career librarians when formal leadership roles might not exist for them?

We need to lead from the middle (or, let's be honest, from maybe even a little lower) through the informal mentoring of peers, re- and cross-training of staff to build skills and ensure knowledge transfer, influencing librarian education programs, encouraging reluctant accidental leaders, and understanding what other people in our profession do. Leadership is an individual choice of lifelong learning and personal development, and a challenge that should be supported by our institutions and senior management. This shift in leadership and mentoring is not dissimilar to the move from a formal, structured, siloed library catalog to a hyper-connected Semantic Web. To continue growing as a profession senior librarians need to be able to support and nurture leadership however it is happening, and at whatever level it may happen. 🌱