

Effective Leadership Development: Challenges for the Libraries

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Abstract We are living in the world of change and uncertainty. Everything is transforming rapidly. Professionals who work for the libraries have to learn the techniques of Leadership for the efficient management of libraries. The conventional management techniques are isolating; where it has been observed that the librarians are still practicing old models. The paper will explain the fundamentals of effective leadership models, methods and various real-life examples such as step-by-step leadership ladder, effective delegation, creative thinking etc... The paper is carefully written to cater the needs of individual librarian and to help him understand his personality, strengths, weaknesses and his potential as a leader. At the end, it will highlight on making work and organization more effective in the changing environment.

Keyword: Leadership Development, Library Management, Librarianship, Delegation

If you do not give service to your member, somebody else will give them. ~ Chintan Pandya

Introduction

As the twenty-first-century approaches, the world is undergoing enormous change, a process of great possibilities. Industrial and technological revolutions lead to the competitive environment. Competition has become more global. No organization or libraries can ignore their members' needs. No longer can librarians simply issue and return relationship as granted. The service industry is one of the oldest professions in the world. Members have become more intelligent in accessing library services. To survive in the competitive world; successful libraries will have to undergo profound cultural changes in their structure. The library professionals have to work quicker, smarter, dream wilder and relate all the members and services in very different ways.

1. Leadership

The librarians of tomorrow will have to establish a real vision and a sense of values for the organizations they wish to lead. These leaders will have to communicate and motivate far more

effectively. They have to be the change model. They have to inculcate the creativity and talent of each individual of their team members. The leader should be able to create a healthy work environment, praise the achievement of each individual, share the success and create next-generation leaders. Leadership has nothing to do with age, caste, level or qualification; it can't happen overnight but it is the journey of human relationship, wisdom, quality and a skill which leads to success.

Leadership is all about creating values, including work environment, healthy and receptive communication. No matter how a librarian is busy during the day, but he must make a time to communicate. All the brilliant ideas are worthless if you don't share them with others. Communication accomplished in many ways – in meetings, face-to-face sessions with colleagues, walking around etc... But most important is never stop communicating. Research says communication doesn't have to happen in big conference rooms; it can happen over a cup of coffee or in any informal ways.

*You are BORN into Genius but have you
RESIGNED yourself to MEDIOCRITY?
~ Robin Sharma*

2. Leadership Development

Looking to the Indian History of corporate and industries; the concept of Human resource management and leadership was first brought into the practice by Jamsetji Tata in the 19th century. He is ever known as one of the best leaders of a corporate world. He was the great visionary and mainly concerned about creating values, ethics, and responsible corporate citizenship. The steel industry, hydro-electric, textile and many such ventures demonstrate his remarkable contribution to the Indian Industrial Development.

Leadership can't be developed unless and until he has the passion to be one. Leadership is the willingness to control evils, the desire to initiate new chapters and the power to get a work done cooperatively using the skills and abilities of other people. It is about the passion which involves enthusiasm for the organization, the ability to listen to people and care about the job through the passion

generated. This involves a single-minded commitment to and for libraries, strength, and a level of comfort in their role.

Leadership can happen at any age, but here are some basic stages of the leadership development which is demonstrated as a Leadership Ladder. The stages may change person to person, but it can be referred as a model stages.



[Leadership Ladder]

2.1 Enthusiasm (Age 21-25 Year): The first stage indicates the highest level of Enthusiasm by LEG WORK. During this period, he has to learn each and every section of the library and become JACK-OF-ALL functions such as collection development, technical processing, use of software, and other librarianship skills. One has to affiliate with Bachelor and Master Degrees along with NET or SET qualification. He should start his career with an initial level of library jobs i.e. Library Trainee, Library Assistants etc...

2.2 Experience (Age 26-30 Year): The second stage is the age of Experience; where he has to do HARD WORK. He has learned the process in the previous stage; but here, one has to acquire in-depth knowledge of any one section and become a domain expert. He can start Ph.D. and initiate the research in the field of Library science. During this period, he can become the middle-level library professional i.e. Assistant Librarian, college librarian, junior manager etc...

2.3 Effectiveness (Age 31-35 Year): The third stage of Leadership Ladder is Effectiveness. One has reached the certain level of experience where he has become expert and effective to provide ideas to the overall development of an organization. He has to use more brain. Creative thinking and insightful knowledge of current trends lead him to take new initiatives. He must have completed the doctoral degree by this time while working at the higher level of the profession such as Librarian, Sr. Manager etc...

2.4 Expansion (36 Year Onwards): The fourth stage is the Leadership Expansion where he has to focus on overall development, contribute to policy framework, expand to national and international level, develop leadership, become mentor and role model for others. He has to be in the leading role in the team. To add more affiliations; a leader can add

values to the career via MBA, fellowship program or postdoctoral programs etc... At this stage, he must have reached the higher level i.e. Head Librarian Sr. Manager etc...

Leader is the one who knows, shows and goes the way ~ John C. Maxwell

3. Creative Thinking

Creativity is one the identical quality of a Leader. He has to be creative in every angle of his work and act. He must be able to create a positive tension, set targets, educate and motivate people, and reward the people who are performing extraordinarily. Creativity is about the ability to anticipate instead of reacting, to think on his feet while always keeping the big picture in mind helping to ensure that the library still maintains its direction and stays on track, and not being afraid to do what is best for members. Library leaders who are creative are not afraid to ask the patron what they think and are able to rearrange employees and funds to find the most successful and effective way to run the organization.

*Read every day something no one else is reading;
Think every day something no one else is thinking.
- Christopher Morley*

4. Effective Delegation

Most of the library managers are good managers but not good leaders only because of their inability to delegate work appropriately. The effective delegation has a major role to play in people management in any organization. It is not about 'work to be done' attitude, but it is about transforming responsibilities and authorities to the subordinates in an effective way. Most of the people fail at proper work delegation or work distribution mainly because of lack of confidence and art of delegation.

Library professionals should remember four basic steps while delegation:

1. Assign Responsibility for clear communication (Proper Instruction)
2. Granting Authority (Give them resources and empower them)
3. Creating Accountability for Results (Make them Answerable)
4. Creating Feedback System (Take Review)

The following delegation chart will show how to identify various day-to-day tasks or job either to be delegated or to be executed:

Urgent	Important	Task/Job	Examples
Yes	No	Delegate it	Reports, MIS, E-mails, Data

			Entry, Routine Work
No	Yes	Decide when to do	Planning, Preparation, Relationship Building, Development
Yes	Yes	Do it now	Crisis, Deadline, Meetings
No	No	Dump it	Unwanted Phone calls, Time wasters, un-important meetings

[Effective Delegation]

5. Conflict Management

Conflict is the disagreement or difference in the opinion of the people or a group. It mainly occurs due to excessive competitiveness, lack of cooperation etc... Conflict management is the process of limiting the negative aspects of conflict while increasing the positive aspects of the conflict. Manage conflicts is one of the toughest tasks of a leader. He has to tackle the situation in a certain manner that he gets the results while the team will end with common agreements. The leader has to create competitive, collaborative, compromising, accommodating and avoiding environment to grip any conflicts in the organization.

Running away from the problem only increases the distance from the solution, but the easier way is to solve it.~ Chintan Pandya

6. Decision Making

A decision can be defined as a course of action purposely chosen from a set of alternatives to achieve organizational or managerial objectives or goals. Decision-making process is a continuous and indispensable component of managing any organization or business activities. The best way to improve decision-making ability is to know the questions analysis (What, when, where, why, how and who), data collection, evaluate, check the impact factors, make a decision and take action. One can't have 100% right decision all the time, but it has to be fare minimum.

7. Conclusion

According to the research, 75% of the members never come-back to the library only because of the attitude or behavior of the staff. Leader has to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the employee, replace ME to WE, boost the employees

by motivating in one or other way of praises, trust each-other, inclusive work environment, communicate effectively, make fair decisions, manage conflicts to have a healthy team relationship, and in last build the leader for tomorrow. Leader has few qualities such as he should have ability to influence and motivate people to perform well.

No man can make good leaders if he wants to do it all by himself and want to take all the credits of doing it. ~ Andrew Carnegie

8. References

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About Author:

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