

Chapter 114

Growing Library Leaders for the Future

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ABSTRACT

Professional development opportunities are important for employees at all levels of an organization. Employees benefit by staying current in their field and advancing their career. Employers benefit by having a better skilled workforce. This chapter focuses on professional development based on the year-long leadership institute run by the Colorado Association of Libraries (CAL) Leadership Development Committee. The development of the CAL Leadership Institute (CALLI) will be discussed along with the curriculum, structure, fees, mentoring, networking, accessibility, and benefits of CALLI to participants and the larger library community. The authors conducted two surveys and eight interviews to gather qualitative and quantitative feedback from current and past CALLI participants. A literature review of current trends in professional development and library leadership programs was completed. The future of professional development in this area is also explored.

INTRODUCTION

Some say that leaders are born, not made. The Colorado Association of Libraries' (CAL) Leadership Development Committee disagrees with that sentiment. The committee believes that leadership takes practice and that it can and must be learned. The future of great libraries requires great library leaders; therefore, teaching people to lead is essential. This chapter will look at the

CAL Leadership Development Committee and the Leadership Institute coordinated for association members. The Leadership Development committee's charge from CAL is:

(a) to develop and offer continuing education opportunities in the area of leadership, including but not limited to the CAL Leadership Institute (CALLI); (b) to work with other CAL units in the recruitment and placement of new leaders

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throughout the association; (c) to partner with other library organizations in the promotion and provision of leadership training and education. (Leadership Development Committee, 2011)

The Committee's goal is to train library staff in all positions to be strong leaders so they can make libraries better on a local, state, and national level. This is achieved primarily by coordinating CALLI on a biannual basis. CALLI is a yearlong leadership training program that covers many aspects of leadership.

"Leaders are in the business of energy management" is how Kets de Vries defines leadership (2003, p. 111). This definition of leadership resonates with the authors because energy management is about self, staff, resources, and time. The Leadership Development Committee views leadership separately from a title. Everyone has the potential to lead. The Committee focuses on teaching how to use different leadership qualities. Diversified training strengthens individuals' confidence to take on challenges and problem solve. Practicing leadership skills requires energy, time, and a safe space. CALLI provides those elements for participants.

Our hope for this chapter is to provide a framework for library entities to implement a leadership program in their communities. We will provide a historical look at CALLI, current program information, and possibilities for the future of professional leadership development for libraries.

BACKGROUND

The methods we used to gather information presented in this chapter include a literature review, two surveys, and eight interviews.

Literature Review

The State Library of Victoria recognized the need to develop a leadership program as one of the

initiatives to help the library remain relevant in the digital age (McCarten, 2011). After conducting a leadership program, they received positive feedback from participants. In particular, one of the participants expressed that she had grown in her knowledge of leadership skills and was using these skills to lead from within her work group (McCarten, 2011). This feedback is in line with how the CALLI committee views leadership. Leadership is not only about being in a position of authority; it can also mean having qualities that make a people leaders within their workgroups.

In Coiffe's article, *Webinars: Continuing Education and the Professional Development of Librarians*, the cost effectiveness of virtual training in relation to shrinking library budgets is discussed. "Nowadays most institutions face budgetary cutbacks, so attending face-to-face meetings, training seminars, or class may be cost prohibitive" (Coiffe, 2012, p. 37). Coiffe (2012) goes on to discuss how the Internet allows staff to keep up to date with new technologies and grow skills by virtually attending a webinar. The Leadership Development Committee considered library budget constraints and tried to make it as cost effective as possible. The CALLI curriculum includes virtual webinars and uses a free online platform for participants to discuss topics, share information, and distribute documents.

Stranack discusses the changing environment of professional development in relation to libraries' financial restraints in his article, *The Connected Librarian: Using Social Media for "Do it Yourself" Professional Development* (2012). "One of the first items to go during a time of financial restraint can be the professional development budget line, limiting the availability of work funded conference participation, travel, journal subscriptions and course fees" (Stranack, 2012, p. 1). Stranack (2012) goes on to mention how emerging technologies have created new ways for people to develop professionally in a virtual environment at little cost.

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