Chapter 16
Leadership Development and Career Planning

Jing Guo
Shanghai Jiao Tong University Library, China

Hao Zhang
Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China

Yijun Zong
Shanghai Jiao Tong University Library, China

ABSTRACT

Academic libraries are in an increasingly complex and dynamic social environment. This necessitates an outward development model that focuses on the various ways academic libraries need to adapt to these changes. The trend of development in higher education has led to rapid growth of digital and internet resources, large-scale application of various technologies, and new subject integration or differentiation. These trends constantly change patrons' relationship with information, so academic libraries should be open-minded, far-sighted, and creative, building stronger leadership and development agendas. To accomplish this, librarians must also be equipped to adapt to these changes. This chapter will introduce the trends of development in higher education and academic libraries and will explain the necessity of leadership development in responding to the change. By reforming management philosophy and structure, human resources, teamwork, and capability enhancement, academic libraries can turn passive into active, becoming patron-oriented, innovative, flexible, and far-sighted.

BACKGROUND AND TRENDS

The conceptual understanding of the nature of libraries is rapidly changing. Academic libraries are the windows to research and academic advancement. Due to their close affiliation with the higher echelons of academia, it is necessary for academic libraries to take into account the evolution of the nature of libraries and to adapt accordingly. In order to increase the functionality and value of the academic library,

several changes must be made. The library must become service oriented through a strengthening of the scientific management of the library's resources and staff. The academic library must also become user oriented and capable of serving patrons from all walks of academia (Guo & Chen, 2014). As bastions of the academic library, librarians and library staff should be acutely aware of their own changing roles and responsibilities, while library management must encourage and nurture the leadership skills and professional development of library employees. Ideally, through the restructuring of the academic library, library staff will be able to think about their own positions from a new point of view and achieve greater confidence and job fulfillment within the organization.

According to Dr. Paul Hersey, leadership is the process of influencing others (Liu, 2014). As such, leadership is instrumental in organizational development. An effective leader will set long-term goals and ensure that organizational activities and performance are aligned with these aims in order to achieve success in the long run (Zhang, 2011). A qualified head librarian must have excellent leadership skills to manage the planning and development of the library. However, the management team, under the leadership of the head librarian, is responsible for the fulfillment of the long-term goals and aims of the library. Strategic planning and persuasion, as well as leadership on the part of the management team, are necessary to this goal attainment process (Li & Xi, 2013). The leadership, strategic planning, and influential power within the management team will assist the head librarian in developing a more creative, collaborative, and passionate workforce, which is paramount in the transformation of the academic library.

The organizational structure of the academic library has undergone massive transformation in keeping with the changing nature of the library. Currently, the academic library utilizes a matrix organizational structure, which focuses on the service requirements of the library and the individual capabilities of its employees. Increasingly, work within the library is delegated as staff projects. Employees are grouped into cross-functional teams, and leadership stems from the assumption of responsibility within the group instead of the traditional authoritative power conferred through appointment by the management team. The implementation of cross-functional teams nurtures leadership and encourages communication and cooperation among staff. Furthermore, such arrangements instill a sense of accomplishment in the group and boost the confidence of the individual (Ouyang, 2011).

Management should provide clear job descriptions for each position, enabling employees to identify and understand their job requirements and thus improve their work and management capabilities. Furthermore, personalized and achievable career paths should be drafted and co-planned by both management and the individual employee.

Career paths should reflect the personal aspirations of the individual with regards to his current employment situation. A career development plan should then be drafted to provide direction for achieving those aims. This provides the employee with a long-term goal and will motivate him to work harder in order to further his career and realize his full potential. This process will unleash the leadership potential of the individual and unlock his creativity and, as a result, create greater value for the organization (Ma, 2014). Individual career paths should also reflect the current work environment and requirements and the development goals of the organization.

In addition to career development, employees should actively better themselves and their work performance. Only when all these factors are in place will employees be equipped to tackle the future challenges of the library field.

14 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/leadership-development-and-career-planning/165596

Related Content

Theory and Theorising in Information Science Scholarship

Patrick Ngulube (2020). *Handbook of Research on Connecting Research Methods for Information Science Research (pp. 18-39).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/theory-and-theorising-in-information-science-scholarship/240518

Thesaurus Construction and Knowledge Management in Information Centers in the Scope of Knowledge Mapping in Public Institutions: The Experience and Initial Results of a Knowledge Mapping Project (BIHAP) in Turkey

Tunc D. Medeni, Gülten Alr, Erkan nan, Aydin Nusret Guclu, Tolga Medeniand Demet Soylu (2017). *Managing Knowledge and Scholarly Assets in Academic Libraries (pp. 244-268).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/thesaurus-construction-and-knowledge-management-in-information-centers-in-the-scope-of-knowledge-mapping-in-public-institutions/174334

The Public Library in an Aging Society: Developing Active Library Participation in Japan

Saori Donkaiand Chieko Mizoue (2014). *Library and Information Science Research in Asia-Oceania: Theory and Practice (pp. 266-283).*

www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-public-library-in-an-aging-society/99964

Survey of Reading Promotion of Public Libraries in China

Junling Zhaoand Wenxian Ge (2020). *International Journal of Library and Information Services (pp. 1-9).*

www.irma-international.org/article/survey-of-reading-promotion-of-public-libraries-in-china/240794

Two Case Studies of Topic-Related Multidimensional Reading Services in China

Huiyan Tang, Yitao Hu, Suoling Zhu, Weiwei Li, Qingkui Xiand Yuxian Liu (2020). *International Journal of Library and Information Services (pp. 25-35).*

www.irma-international.org/article/two-case-studies-of-topic-related-multidimensional-reading-services-in-china/240796