



Leadership Skills: When Are They Taught, When Are they Used?

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Leadership Skills

○ Purpose of Study

To determine the perceptions of new and recent graduates in two ALA accredited U.S. LIS schools toward whether or not leadership is taught and when or if it is used in practice

- San Jose State University, School of Library and Information Science
- University of South Carolina, School of Library and Information Science



Leadership Skills

○ Issues

- Lack of persons with leadership skills in the library community
- Difficulty in recruiting middle and upper-level managers with leadership skills (Albritton & Shaughnessy)
- Neglect of the integration of leadership concepts into mainstream LIS education (Sheldon, Riggs)
- Lack of research on where, how and if leadership skills can be taught



Leadership Skills

○ Literature suggests:

- additional research in leadership in libraries is needed; most found in dissertations outside LIS education
- the leadership skills needed are vision, communication, positioning, self-confidence, mentoring and networking for leadership (Sheldon); vision, inhibited power motive, linguistic abilities, and cognitive complexity (Cendon)
- subordinates do not agree with supervisors' perceptions of their leadership



Leadership Skills

○ Literature Suggests:

- lack of leadership skills might be the cause of the poor image of librarians and effect librarian performance
- leadership competency should be acquired as part of the curriculum of LIS graduate programs, but this frequently does not happen



Leadership Skills

○ Methodology

- Survey posted to school listservs for two + weeks at the end of Fall 2006 semester
- Two anonymous electronic questionnaires
 - Current program students = 299 respondents / 5 did not indicate number of courses; n = 294
 - new students
 - students with three or less courses
 - students about to graduate
 - Program graduates of the last 5 years on the alumni association listserv ; 87 respondents; n = 87



Leadership Skills

SURVEY 1 - CURRENT STUDENTS



Leadership Skills – Table 1

- Program Type (n = 294)
 - 19% - academic
 - 8% - archives
 - 26% - public
 - 11% - special
 - 19% - school
 - <1% - self-employed
 - 28% - undecided* * (5% of near grads undecided)
- No. of Courses Taken (n = 294)
 - 10% - new students
 - 54% - 3 or < 3
 - 36% - near graduation



Leadership Skills – Table 2

- Time in Program and Management Courses Taken (n = 264)*
 - **3 or < 3 (n = 159)**
 - 24% - none
 - 35% - core only
 - 1% - core +1
 - **Near Graduation (n = 105)**
 - 28% - core only
 - 8% - core + 1
 - 3% - core + 2
- *new students not included



Leadership Skills – Table 3

- Time Spent on Management in Non-Management Courses (n = 253)* *11 did not answer
 - 27% - no management instruction in non-management classes
 - <10% - had more than minimal time spent on management instruction in non-management classes



Leadership Skills – Tables 4 & 5

- Courses Specializing in Leadership (n = 264)
 - **3 or < 3**
 - 24% - no leadership course
 - 29% - leadership only in the core
 - **Near Graduation**
 - 26% - no leadership or only in the core
 - 13% - leadership in core and 1 to 3 other courses
- Time Spent on Leadership in Courses
(n = 248) * * 16 did not answer
 - 28% - no course with a leadership component
 - 61% - had a course with 5 or 10% leadership component
 - 5% - had a course with a leadership component of 50% or more



Leadership Skills – Tables 6 & 7

○ How Soon Students Expect to Manage

(n = 294)*

*includes new students

- 95% - expect to manage (5% never)
- 57% - felt they would immediately
- 29% - felt it would take 1 to 3 years
- 9% - felt it would take 3 or more years

○ How Soon Students Expect to Assume a Leadership Role (n = 294)

- 2% - never expect to lead
- 76% - felt they would immediately lead
- 22% - felt they would wait 3 or more years to lead



Leadership Skills – Table 8

○ Where Students Would Choose to Lead *

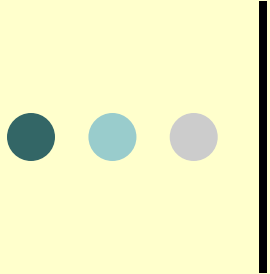
***469 responses - students could choose more than one**

- 35 - indicated they would accept no leadership role or wouldn't accept one in the survey choices given
- 221 - indicated they would begin their leadership role in a professional association
- 130 - would begin in a social group
- 56 - would begin in a religious group
- 27 - would begin in a community association or group



Leadership Skills

SURVEY 2 - PROGRAM GRADUATES



Leadership Skills – Table 9

- Years Since Graduation (n = 87)
 - 48% - graduated within two years
 - 43% - graduated 3 to 5 years ago
 - 9% - graduated five or more years ago
- Where Presently Employed (n = 87)
 - 17% - academic librarians
 - 2% - archivists
 - 34% - public librarians
 - 13% - school librarians
 - 14% - special librarians
 - 3% - self-employed
 - 12% - occupation other than LIS
 - 5% - not employed



Leadership Skills – Tables 10 & 11

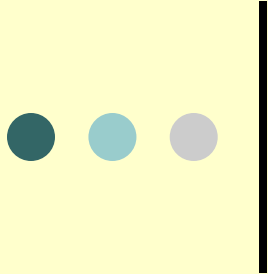
- Management Courses Taken (n = 86)*

*1 “not-working” did not respond

- 70% - took only a core management course
- 20% - took two management courses
- 10% - took two or more management courses

- Time Spent on Management in Non-Management Courses (n = 86)* *1 did not respond

- 23% - no management instruction in non-management courses
- 89% - 10% or less of course content spent on management instruction in non-management courses
- 6% - management instruction in most courses



Leadership Skills – Tables 12 & 13

- Courses Specializing in Leadership (n = 86)*

* 1 “school librarian” did not respond

- 75% - leadership only in the core
- 25% - leadership in core and 1 to 3 other courses

- Time Spent on Leadership in Courses (n = 87)

- 34% - no course with a leadership component
- 6% - leadership components in most courses
- 55 % - had a course with 5 or 10% leadership component
- 5% - had a course with a leadership component of 50% or more



Leadership Skills – Table 14

- No. of Persons Supervised Before Graduation (n = 87) and at Present (n = 83)*

* 4 “not working” are not supervising

- 29% - supervising more persons than before graduation
- 40% - supervising the same number
- 31% - supervising fewer persons than before graduation

Note: School and reference librarians reported the most increase in supervision of persons after graduation.

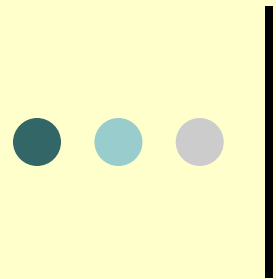


Leadership Skills – Table 15

○ Assume Management Position (n = 83)*

* 4 “not working” did not respond

- 38% - currently manage
- 6% - choose never to manage
- 7% - would choose to manage immediately if a management position available
- 49% - would choose to wait 1 to 3 years to move to a management position



Leadership Skills – Tables 16 & 17

○ Exercise Leadership Skills (n = 87)*

* 3 did not respond

- 70% - exercise skills immediately
- 11% - never
- 19% - would wait 1 or more years

○ Where Graduates Choose to Lead (n = 76)*

* 11 did not respond - graduates could choose more than one

- 40 - chose a professional association or both a professional and a social association
- 9 - chose social or religious or both a social and religious association
- 12 - would accept no leadership role or wouldn't accept one in the survey choices given



Leadership Skills

○ Summary of Findings

- Current LIS students and recent graduates report receiving very little management and even less leadership coverage in coursework (supports work of Sheldon, Riggs)
- Respondents planning careers in school librarianship and youth services seem to be exposed more than others
- Students are not selecting management and/or leadership courses as electives
- Respondents (90%) willing to take on leadership roles in professional associations; only 29% thought it likely



Leadership Skills

○ Implications

- Learning why students opt not to take management and/or leadership courses might prove beneficial for curriculum planning and standards revision
- More exposure of school and youth services librarians suggests standards that emphasize leadership roles (such as AASL's *Information Power*) might provide impetus for more inclusion of leadership skills in the curriculum
- Minimal exposure to management and/or leadership in LIS education suggests continuing professional development in leadership skills is essential



Leadership Skills

○ Suggestions for Further Study

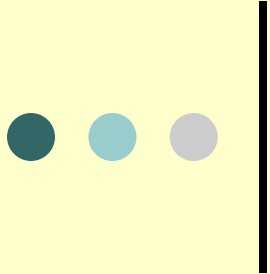
- Why do students opt not to take management / leadership courses?
- Will standards that emphasize leadership development prompt a more effective LIS curriculum and produce graduates with more leadership skills ?
- What is the most effective way for professional associations to provide leadership skills education and training?
- Do librarians who have had additional leadership skills education and training through professional associations demonstrate these skills in the workplace?



Leadership Skills

QUESTIONS?

DISCUSSION

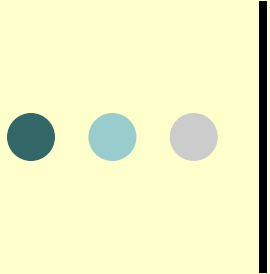


Leadership Skills

Appendix A – Literature Review

○ Leadership Research:

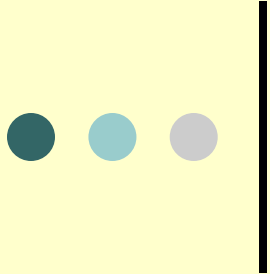
- Studies of leadership in library literature; majority found in dissertations
 - **Sheldon** (1991) identified the necessary qualities of vision, communication, positioning, self-confidence, mentoring and networking for leadership and sought to assess the degree to which librarians in leadership positions possessed these
 - **Davis** (2003) found that leaders that had early career engagement in professional associations maintained involvement and are viewed as more influential by peers
 - **Kascus** (2004) identifies leadership as a role in team management



Leadership Skills

Appendix A – Literature Review

- **Leadership Research:**
 - Studies of leadership in library literature
 - **Young, Herson and Powell** (2006) found little agreement between perceptions of Gen-X academic and public librarians toward attributes needed for leadership in libraries Albritten (1993) tested a model of transformational vs. transactional leadership
 - **Matthews** (2002) describes four stages of transition to becoming a lead librarian
 - **Becker** (2005) tested leadership strategies of academic librarians

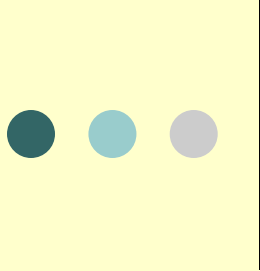


Leadership Skills

Appendix A – Literature Review

○ Leadership Research:

- Studies of leadership in library literature
 - **Sommerville, Schader and Huston (2005)** advocate systems thinking as a pedagogical strategy for helping employees reconsider traditional roles
 - **Parish (2001)** and **Bowden (2002)** investigated the effects of leadership behavior of supervisors on immediate subordinates
 - **Suwannarata (1994)** found research library directors perceived they exhibited transformational leadership behaviors but perception not shared by subordinates

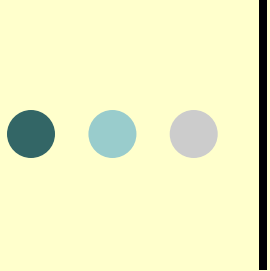


Leadership Skills

Appendix A – Literature Review

○ Leadership Research:

- Studies of leadership in library literature
 - **Kazlauskas** (1993) found academic librarians autonomy in the work setting was linked more to job satisfaction than leadership practices
 - **Little** (1994) found degree of innovation is related to leader vision
 - **McCowan** (2004) found organizational transition did not affect leadership style
 - **Hess** (2001) found that adoption of information technology created new public library leadership roles

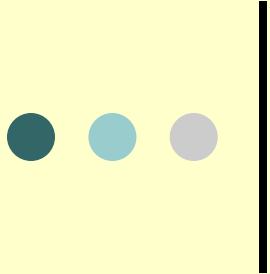


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Appendix A – Literature Review

○ Leadership Research:

- Studies of leadership in library literature
 - **Brown and Shepard** (1998) equate showing teachers how to use technology with leadership for school librarians
 - **Edwards** (2002) found that teachers (school librarians) are most receptive and successful in earning new technologies and strategies from peers, esp. those viewed as leaders
 - **McCoy** (2001) found school librarians are prepared to take the lead role in staff development in new technology curriculum integration

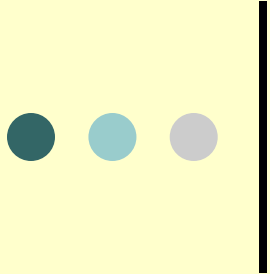


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Appendix A – Literature Review

○ Leadership Research:

- Studies of leadership in library literature
 - **Underwood** (2003) suggests that the leadership of the school librarian can position the school library as the instructional hub of the school
 - **Carroll** (1995) found the leadership role of the school librarian is critical to the curriculum integration of instructional technology and staff development
 - **Greenan** (2002) found that school library leadership is vital to effective collection development



Leadership Skills

Appendix A – Literature Review

○ Leadership Research:

- Studies of leadership in library literature
 - **Kuo** (1997) found continuing professional education is needed for effective leadership of high school library directors
 - **Cendon** (1996) found leadership characteristic in making medical libraries powerful in the parent organization include vision, inhibited power motive, linguistic abilities, and cognitive complexity
 - **Dale** (2003) found 90% of a special libraries conference delegates wanted libraries to take a leadership role in information management of their organization, but only 29% thought it likely