
Organizational Development, Leadership, Change, and the Future of Libraries

DENISE STEPHENS AND KEITH RUSSELL

ABSTRACT

This article discusses the actual and potential use of organizational development (OD) premises and practices in libraries. Several academic research libraries have adopted an OD approach in order to create and maintain a healthy organization, improve operations and culture, and anticipate and manage change. There are many reasons for this trend, including a natural resonance between library cultures and the underlying philosophy of OD. Aspects of change management are discussed, along with leadership issues. The article cites many information resources from several disciplines that may be useful as library organizations evolve.

INTRODUCTION

As we complete this issue of *Library Trends* on organizational development (OD) and leadership, we would like to share our observations, comments, and opinions regarding OD, leadership, change, and other library concerns. To a large extent, our commentary is based on a combined fifty years of experience exploring the applications of OD in academic, special, and national research libraries. As we developed the concept for this *Library Trends* issue, recruited and worked with authors and the *Library Trends* staff, and advised authors on content and editorial issues, we also reviewed related literature in library and information science, organizational development, and several other disciplines. Not surprisingly, we found many of our experience-based views reinforced, while others were challenged or expanded.

Denise Stephens, Acting University Librarian, Syracuse University Library, 222 Waverly Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13224-2010 and Keith Russell, The Libraries, The University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 60645-7505

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We share several beliefs, premises, and values that underlie our approach to organizational issues, change, and leadership:

1. *Library employees are an underutilized (and often undervalued) resource.* Every person working in a library has a unique contribution to make toward the success of the organization, provided that person is committed to the mission of the library and his/her values are consistent with organizational values. Many of the skills employees bring to the job are never utilized. More and more employees today (but not all) seek to be more fully engaged in the organization and its mission and to use more of their skills and knowledge in the workplace. At the same time, organizations are beginning to recognize the tremendous untapped potential within their employees. In the business literature, authors such as Drucker (2002), Meister (1998), Paton, Taylor, & Storey (2004), and Pfeffer (1998) recognize that corporations definitely need to pay attention to human capital issues.
2. *Group processes in libraries can be improved.* Much of the work of libraries is accomplished with two or more staff members working together, whether in work teams, committees, or task forces. Effective group processes are essential to the success of the organization, and every employee should have some familiarity with facilitation processes—whether or not that employee ever leads a meeting or supervises another employee. Some libraries routinely offer facilitation training. Schwarz (2002) is often considered the authoritative scholarly work on group facilitation. Moore (2004) discusses practical experience combining facilitation and leadership in a public library system.
3. *Libraries as organizations can be structured and operated more effectively.* Library organizations are often incredibly complex, sometimes with incompatible (even contradictory) internal systems that undermine the success of the organization and its staff. Organizations are not perfect, but they can be improved. OD as a discipline offers an excellent foundation and a research-based set of tools and approaches for running effective organizations of all kinds, including libraries. In the future, another discipline or approach may emerge to eclipse OD, but at the present time it is a proven and sound approach. Holloway (2004) describes the impact of OD in some academic research libraries.
4. *Leadership is critical in libraries, and all employees should be seen (and developed) as leaders.* There are many models for leadership, and we tend to favor those that may acknowledge that in some circumstances top-down management does work, but in most circumstances other approaches are more effective in creating a healthy work environment, utilizing human resources, engaging employees, meeting customer needs, and in other ways fulfilling the mission of the organization. In our view, libraries should actively experiment with a wide range of leadership styles. We are also intrigued by the work of several authors who view every employee as

a leader (at one level or another, in various ways) and who recommend leadership training for everyone (Badaracco, 2002; Raelin, 2003). We believe that leadership skills can be improved through training, mentoring, and other experiences. Mason & Wetherbee (2004) describe current leadership development programs that focus on library employees and comment on the structure and evaluation of these programs.

5. *Positive and empowering approaches to managing and leading libraries are more effective than some traditional approaches.* We believe the current movement toward positive approaches to individuals and organizations has significant potential for reshaping and invigorating libraries and other organizations. Various authors have written on both the theory and application of this approach (a) in broadening our definition of human potential (for example, Buckingham & Clifton, 2001; Gardner, 1983, 1999); (b) in focusing on positive psychology and related topics (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Snyder & Lopez, 2002; Turner, Barling, & Zacharatos, 2002; Wright, 2003); (c) in applying appreciative inquiry, an approach to identifying what works well in an organization and how the organization can do more of the same (Sullivan, 2004); and (d) in taking action to improve often-dreaded performance appraisals so that they are more effective for both the employee and the organization (Coens & Jenkins, 2000). *How can libraries further embrace the results of such research and make their cultures and environments more positive for people who work, study, and do research in their physical as well as virtual spaces?*
6. *Change in libraries can be anticipated, planned, and implemented in better ways.* The library community is well aware of the impacts of rapidly changing information technology, evolving user expectations and information-seeking behaviors, and changes in information publishing and dissemination. It is unclear, however, whether awareness of these driving environmental issues equals understanding and whether the knowledge of these issues is applied to planning and implementation of change in library organizations. Hiller and Self (2004) note the methodology of systematic assessment in several libraries' planning efforts. Deiss (2004) ventures into rarely trod territory to discuss the organizational choices (presented as dichotomies) and risks faced by libraries seeking to implement meaningful change. Each library organization is unique. Nevertheless, generalized documentation and study of effective library change efforts across various library types remains a much-needed area of research.
7. *Ideas and tools for improving libraries as organizations usually originate from disciplines outside library and information science.* We concur with Joel Barker's suggestion that anyone who wants to have a better idea of what is happening and what is about to happen needs to read widely in a number of sources one normally might consider exotic or tangential (Barker, 1993, pp. 213–218). While he developed this concept to help himself

and others anticipate coming and future paradigm shifts, Barker's technique is equally useful for scanning the environment for other purposes. Libraries are not the only organizations on the planet, and most OD applications are first developed in corporations or other organizations. Our reference list documents the range of sources we find useful.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The discipline of OD has evolved over the past fifty years or so. Both French & Bell (1999) and Grievies (2000) describe the historical development of the field. Broader perspectives on the nature of the discipline are contained in Carnevale (2003), French & Bell (1999), and Wheatley, Tannenbaum, Griffin, & Quade (2003). But what is OD? Perhaps the most comprehensive definition is the one provided by French and Bell, who describe OD as

a long-term effort, led and supported by top management, to improve an organization's visioning, empowerment, learning, and problem-solving processes, through an ongoing, collaborative management of organization culture—with special emphasis on the culture of intact work teams and other team configurations—using the consultant-facilitator role and the theory and technology of applied behavioral science, including action research. (French & Bell, 1999, pp. 25–26)

The authors then devote several pages to explain the meaning of each part of the definition (French & Bell, pp. 26–29).

On a practical day-to-day level, we think of OD as an ongoing, thoughtfully planned effort by all members of an organization to improve how that organization operates, serves its stakeholders, fulfills its mission, and approaches its vision. What are more compelling than the definition of OD are the underlying and continuously evolving philosophy and values of the discipline.

Carnevale describes OD as

more than a set of techniques. The myriad interventions used by OD practitioners are essentially facilitative; they are process oriented. However, these procedures are expressions of a deep array of humanistic values and assumptions. The core attitude of Organizational Development supports the participation and development of people in organizations. The heart of OD is realizing human potential at work. Organizational Development is optimistic about what people can achieve and decidedly depends on high trust. (Carnevale, 2003, p. 113)

Core Concepts That Drive OD and Related Efforts

Relating to the values and assumptions of OD, Carnevale identifies eight core concepts (quoted below) that currently drive efforts to improve organizational effectiveness in the United States (Carnevale, pp. 15–16). All of these concepts relate to OD in one way or another, and most are evident in libraries.

1. "Customer or client satisfaction is the primary goal of the organization." Libraries have a tradition of being client centered and client driven, and academic libraries are often known on campus for their dedication to serving users. Many of the assessment programs in academic research libraries relate directly to the user. (See, for example, Cook & Heath, 2001; Deiss, 2004; Hiller & Self, 2004.)
2. "There is a strong commitment to human capital development." Libraries often have strong staff development programs and strive to implement sound human resources programs. Articles by Hawthorne (2004) and Oltmanns (2004) provide insight into such programs in libraries.
3. "Continuous improvement customarily borne of the ideas of various forms of work teams is a paramount system goal." In many ways this relates to the concept of the learning organization (Senge, 1990), and several articles describe the ways both academic research libraries and public libraries are applying learning organization and team concepts. (See, for example, Bernfeld, 2004; Giesecke & McNeil, 2004; Phipps, 2004.)
4. "There is an enthusiastic pledge to employee involvement and participation in all kinds of forms." Libraries are often among the first organizations to adopt newer concepts in leadership and management, which often include an emphasis on staff involvement in library decisions and planning.
5. "Common vision is prized." Libraries often develop strategic plans, and one step in the process may be the development of a shared vision, either by broad staff participation or by other means designed to elicit staff concurrence with and support for a vision.
6. "Government organizations are encouraged to be entrepreneurial." Many university libraries serve public institutions funded in part by state government, and there are several U.S. national libraries created and funded by the federal government. As governmental entities such libraries may be part of this movement.
7. "Organizational culture becomes the rage." Libraries often have a unique culture, and surveys are sometimes used to characterize that culture. Kaarst-Brown, Nicholson, von Dran, and Stanton (2004) review the literature on organizational culture and relate research findings to library cultures.
8. "Empowerment." Empowerment is, of course, one of the current buzzwords in management literature, and libraries continue to explore ways to empower their employees. Cynicism about the concept results from faulty application and likely misunderstanding about the dual-sided nature of empowerment. Empowered staff members are responsible and trusted with some degree of discretionary decision-making. In cases where organizational culture discourages "going beyond the job descrip-

tion,” or where staff members do not feel safe to practice responsibility, *empowerment* is only an empty word.

These eight core concepts that Carnevale identifies are exemplary and naturally appeal to leaders, managers, and other employees of libraries. It is no wonder that in recent years an increasing number of academic research libraries have established positions that focus on OD (Holloway, 2004). The range of activities and programs in libraries that constitute an OD effort, or relate to such an effort, is staggering and subject to interpretation. OD includes almost everything we do in libraries that relates to how we treat employees, customers, and other stakeholders; how we develop and execute our plans; how we organize, learn, communicate, solve problems, and reach decisions; how we evaluate our programs, determine the need for change, and implement change; and how we consciously or unconsciously live our collective values and create effective organizational cultures. Actual OD-related programs in libraries may include diversity, staff development, human resources, customer service, outreach, assessment, and various other administrative and operational programs.

It is easy to see that OD is the glue that interconnects the organization as a whole and that OD efforts must take a holistic approach and recognize the library as an integrated system with a unique ecology all its own. And, of course, the library as a system (or combination of interconnected systems) must be viewed in the larger complex of organizations with which it interacts in various ways.

Our OD Process Model

In a nutshell, the basic application of OD in libraries or any organization is fairly straightforward. In its simplest form, the process can be described as a five-step OD process model:

1. *Create and foster a healthy organization.* Administrators, staff, and other stakeholders share in this responsibility. Much has been written on healthy organizations, ranging from the relatively early work of Warlick (1984, pp. 3–5) to a recent monograph that devotes seven articles to the topic of “New definitions of organizational health” (Hesselbein, Goldsmith, & Beckhard, 1997, pp. 315–374).
2. *Monitor the organization for evidence that some part(s) of the organization is/are not working well.* This is everyone’s responsibility in general terms, though administration needs to ensure that mechanisms are in place for monitoring systems and communicating observations of possible problems. OD surveys and other tools may be used to assess the status of the organization and to help diagnose areas that may need help (such as communication, interpersonal relations, clarity of job assignments, etc.). Some of the tools used are described in French and Bell (1999) and Cummings and Worley (2001).

3. *When an issue is identified and diagnosed, make a conscious decision whether to take action to correct the situation.* Roger Schwarz, in his thorough monograph on the topic of facilitation, has a similar step in his process for determining whether or not to intervene in a group process (Schwarz, 2002, pp. 166–169).
4. *If a decision to intervene is made, choose one or more appropriate actions and implement it/them.* “OD offers a number of methods to deal with an assortment of organizational problems. They can be applied in a pure fashion or worked as hybrids. Basically, they all affirm the worth of people” (Carnevale, 2003, p. 123). The organization as a whole must be considered when making changes, even if at first glance the problem only seems to affect one part of the organization.
5. *Evaluate the result(s) of the intervention to see if additional action may be needed.* Does the intervention produce the intended results? Are there any unintended consequences, particularly negative ones, which may exacerbate the problem or create other problems?

This cycle can serve as the backbone of the organization’s OD program and can be utilized with various systems within the library. Phipps (2004) provides an overview of how various systems within a library interrelate and are part of the larger whole.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE NATURE OF LIBRARIES

In many ways libraries are enlightened organizations and are natural test beds for the premises and tools of OD. In academia, for example, libraries are often campus leaders in planning, customer service, staff development, diversity programs, and the application of technology. Library employees in general are intelligent, collegial, well educated, well read, curious about a wide range of topics, proactive, and often eager to try out new approaches—and are willing to share the results of what they learn with others via conference presentations, articles, and informal discussion. They share a common set of values, which often includes a commitment to service and the provision of broad access to information for all customers. Members of the library staff are often naturally inclined to read scholarly literature and to contribute to that literature, and in many institutions faculty status for librarians further encourages such activity. Those who work in libraries have ready access to information and are usually expert at locating information resources. Further, at least in academic institutions, members of the library staff often know teaching and research faculty who contribute to the scholarly literature. Some of those scholars may be resident experts on OD, organizational behavior, change management, and other related subjects.

The library and information science profession benefits from strong professional associations that facilitate the sharing of organizational experi-

ences about what works and what does not work in the delivery of information to users, the leadership and management of libraries, the education of librarians and other library staff, the worldwide sharing of bibliographical resources, and the role of libraries in the overall scholarly communication process. Libraries have a long history of being catalysts for extensive levels of cooperation with other libraries and organizations, making the most of limited resources and often delivering unique information products and services to users. For example, Gardner, Gilbertson, Hutchinson, Lynch, McCue, and Paster (2002) describe a cooperative venture involving a national library and more than thirty universities and other organizations to produce a Web site of quality information on agriculture and related topics. Russell, Ames-Oliver, Fund, Proctor, and Vannaman (2003) summarize the results and benefits of an extended cooperative venture at one university between a library and a campus-wide professional development unit to enrich offerings that benefit not only the library but the whole campus.

In addition, many of us view libraries as relatively humane organizations in which to work. In highly functioning libraries, leaders, managers, and staff work constantly to improve organizational culture. There is a fairly broad awareness of much of the relevant literature and trends relating to human capital and the essential importance of all employees to the effectiveness of organizations.

These attributes of libraries can make it both logical and easy for libraries to apply OD tools and techniques in day-to-day operations as well as in special projects. *With all these positive attributes, can libraries adapt more quickly to change, drive change, and anticipate paradigm shifts? How else can libraries capitalize on their strengths?*

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CHANGE

Change, as an organizationally significant activity, is well documented as necessary for libraries to remain relevant. In a March 2004 Library Literature keyword search combining the terms “change or change management,” more than 1,500 results were generated. Most of this literature is relatively focused and dedicated to specific library functions or desired organizational responses to certain environmental stimuli. Representative recent works include change in library acquisitions, information services, or technology deployment to meet narrowly defined change imperatives (Calhoun, 2003; Siddiqui, 2003; Wilson, 2003).

An area in need of further exploration is that of organizational transition itself—the responses to and leadership/management requirements of change in library organizations. Much has been written about general organizational change and the leadership requirements of change agents. Fundamental literature on this topic is plentiful (Bridges, 1991; Bolman & Deal, 1997; Cummings & Worley, 2001; Kotter, 1996; Kouzes & Posner, 1995; O’Toole, 1996; Schein, 1992; Senge, 1990). While highly relevant to

the general understanding of organizational change and the leadership characteristics necessary to achieve it, these writings are based largely on the cultures of corporate enterprises.

Library organizations, unlike those generally characterized in much organizational change literature, have a unique societal role and operate under cultures that may bear few similarities to their corporate counterparts. An increasing number of useful writings have emerged in the journal literature that treat the general issues of library change. Recent works offer the library context in the discussion of organizational change while remaining limited to specific outcomes or organizational areas (McKnight, 2002; Mosenkis, 2002). Library organizations need more adaptable models and meaningful case studies that clearly link leadership behaviors to organizational outcomes (Schwartz, 1997). *How do these efforts begin? What are the landmines (dangers) and risks?* There is no single, foolproof strategy for developing the library organization. Similarly, there is no single approach or tactic for leading organizations in libraries. More research is needed to model change processes, track the progress of major organizational change efforts in libraries, and document their effectiveness.

The Institutional Context for Library OD

One powerful and undeniable factor in determining organizational success (or frustration) is the institutional context in which libraries function. That context defines the relationships and obstacles libraries must navigate in order to accomplish their missions. Institutional realities (vision, priorities, resources, and politics) determine the amount of influence the library has in shaping broader outcomes and, thus, in maintaining relevancy. The library is *owned* by all of the institution, manifested as individual stakeholders with highly specific needs and perceptions. Yet libraries are not necessarily understood as *complete organizations* to be managed and developed outright and in concert with the institution.

Leaders and others in libraries who represent the organization within the institution encounter various situations indicating a disconnect between the library's organizational self-understanding and the institution's understanding about the library. The disconnect appears in various settings and circumstances, usually based on one (or more) of many possible uncertainties. *What is the role of the library within institutions (academic and governmental)? What is the library's alignment with institutional goals, expectations, culture, and priorities? What are the institutional culture and perceptions of the library's credibility, autonomy, effectiveness, influence, and traditional relationships? How does the library stand in the competition for resources?* These questions have seen only limited treatment in the library literature (Downing, 2003; Hawkins and Battin, 1998; Kirchner, 1999; McCabe & Person, 1995; Usherwood & Pearce, 2003).

Much more research is needed to identify and adopt effective strategies for solidifying the library's role and influence within parent institutions. Similarly, more scholarly effort is needed to provide practical methods for use in assessing library contributions to institutional goals (for example, learning outcomes in the academic institution). If libraries are to design and redesign themselves with deliberateness and purpose, they must do so within the larger framework of complex and dynamic institutional environments.

Diagnosis of the Library Organization

Diagnosis should precede significant organizational change efforts. Library organizations (manifested as people) must be self-aware and educated with an understanding of the underlying cultures that shape them. They must learn *why* things are as they are, the *way* things are done, the unspoken (or misspoken) *expectations*, and the other *informal systems* that influence the people in the library. In this regard library research has yet to emerge.

The human dynamic of organizations and its impact on change is well documented in the management literature. Perception, fear, trust (or lack thereof), and other internal human factors may multiply in the organizational setting to create generalized reactions to the unfamiliar or to change that is inconsistent with the prevailing culture. Established, though not necessarily articulated, organizational customs, norms, and values also play an influential role in determining the character of the organization. These and other cultural factors inform how work is done, the expectations related to personal influence and autonomy, and (most importantly) *what is perceived as important* for the organization to do. Diagnosing and effectively engaging the existing culture is essential as a starting point in defining and guiding the organization's future (Harrison, 1994; Kegan & Lahey, 2001; Weisbord, 1978).

Libraries, like other organizations, operate in ways largely influenced by their prevailing cultures. Within these cultures lie strong beliefs and values, some of which may exist in conflict with the formal and/or other informal expressions of *what is organizationally important* within a particular library. Kaarst-Brown and her colleagues describe the phenomena of competing values and the importance of identifying them in any organization (Kaarst-Brown, Nicholson, von Dran, & Stanton, 2004). The key to understanding fully the library's values and other aspects of its culture is effective organizational diagnosis. More research is needed to identify and assess existing cultural assessment tools for application in library environments. This work should consider, in fact, whether the cultures of library organizations are substantially different from other not-for-profit service entities, thus requiring unique assessment tools and approaches. Such research would

enable libraries to understand and manage a myriad of issues. *What are staff perceptions about the necessity for change? What is the organization's readiness for change? What are the points of conflict?* There will be winners and losers (no matter how positive or participatory the change process). Hard outcomes may simply be inevitable. *How can the organization cope with this inevitability and protect important assets like good will and personal commitment? What are the ethical issues and responsibilities in undertaking an OD effort? How will we know if we succeed? What if we don't? How do we effectively manage conflict?* No significant change will occur without some degree of skepticism or deep, sincere disagreement about vision. In some environments, conflict arising from the work of organizational development—substantial change—is akin to competition for the soul of the library.

An important learning outcome from organizational diagnosis is the uncovering of psychological contracts. These are the unwritten (and often unspoken) *understandings* held by individuals about expectations, privilege, power, obligations, rewards, and the like. However, psychological contracts create powerful organizational mandates that may be inconsistent with the formally articulated mission and practices. Management and human relations literature provides considerable treatment of this issue (Anderson, 1996; Makin, Cooper & Cox, 1996; Rousseau, 1995; Turnley & Feldman, 1999). While not evident in the written mission and mandates (policies) that govern organizations, psychological contracts are perceived by many staff as no less binding. Violation of the psychological contract often occurs without the knowledge of the offender (usually those who are in authority) and can escalate to general distrust, skepticism, and rejection of efforts to develop the organization's capabilities (Robinson, 1996).

All library staff, regardless of rank, face the challenges of organizational development—the continuous work of defining and designing their organizations. Leaders and other change agents must understand the psychological mandates that influence human organizational behaviors if real change and ongoing development is to occur.

User Influence on the Development of Library Organizations

Users are a fertile source of information about the breadth and quality of library offerings. Libraries have come to accept the centrality of user feedback in planning and assessing services. Efforts to quantify *how much* and *how well* libraries serve their users are well documented in the professional literature. Whether calculating the library inputs and outputs (transactions), or measuring the quality and outcomes of library services, useful resources abound to assist libraries in understanding their interactions with users (Cook & Heath, 2001; Friedlander, 2002). Some libraries have engaged users in the design of services. Advisory groups are another means of using feedback to inform planning and decision-making. Some efforts have centered on new technology-driven projects or other one-time

planning efforts (Pugnale, 1987). While critical, these approaches do not lend themselves to direct, active user involvement and influence in the planning and management of programs.

A more empathetic approach involves direct organization-user interaction in a partnership that gives users meaningful influence and investment in the outcomes. Empathetic approaches emerge from the perspective that empowered customers can engage organizations in uncovering and solving the problems they face in their relationship with the organization. These customers may provide powerful insight useful in designing the future of commercial and other enterprises (Lei & Greer, 2003). *How, then, can users more directly influence the development of library organizations? Would this approach be effective, or even practical, in the library setting?* Experimentation and research is needed to answer these questions.

ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Gill makes an excellent point about the relationship between change and leadership: "While change must be well managed—it must be planned, organized, directed and controlled—it also requires effective leadership to introduce change successfully. It is leadership that makes the difference" (Gill, 2003, p. 307).

But what is good leadership? There is so much written about leadership that it is difficult for anyone to know where to turn for useful information on the topic. Steven Sample, president of the University of Southern California, provides this assessment:

The very concept of leadership is elusive and tricky. It's hard to define in a way that is satisfactory to everyone, although most people believe they know it when they see it. Certainly there are natural leaders who seem to gravitate effortlessly to positions of power and authority. And yet many of the world's greatest leaders demonstrated relatively little aptitude for leadership in their youth, but instead learned this esoteric art through study, apprenticeship and practice. (Sample, 2002, pp. 1–2)

Review articles by Storey (2004a) and Van Wart (2003) provide overviews of leadership and leadership development theory and practice and point out that there is relatively little consensus on some issues in the field. Differing perspectives persist, no matter how much is written. In our view, these diverse perspectives on leadership create a certain tension within libraries—a tension that creates conflict where instead it should create opportunities for healthy discourse and a diversity of approaches to leadership. In practical terms, however, we have observed that the diverse views of employees on what constitutes effective leadership may manifest themselves in how each employee would like to be treated and in the type of leader he/she would prefer. Employees who would *just like to be told what to do* may appreciate a supervisor who practices top-down, directive leadership. Other employees who *expect to be involved* in decisions affecting their work

may prefer a supervisor who practices aspects of facilitative, participatory, or shared leadership.

The broader literature on leadership is of some comfort in acknowledging that, despite all that is written on this popular topic, there are many, many unanswered questions. (See, for example, Hesselbein, Goldsmith, & Somerville, 1999; Storey, 2004c; Yukl, 2002.) Occasionally an author or editor will focus on leadership in the public sector (see, for example, Javidan & Waldman, 2003; Van Wart, 2003; and Svara, 1994). Several authors write on leadership in library and information science, including Hernon, Powell, and Young (2001, 2002), Riggs (2001), and Winston (2001a). In addition, Winston recruited several authors to help compile a recent work on the topic (Winston, 2001b).

Needless to say, if it is difficult to define leadership, it is difficult to design programs for developing the leaders of the future. Murphy and Riggio (2003) assembled works by several authors on leadership development issues. Ready and Conger (2003) provide general insights into various factors that can undermine sincere efforts to develop leaders, and Sorcher and Brant (2002) address the issue of selecting future leaders. Within library and information science, Mason and Wetherbee (2004) review programs for developing leaders and raise important issues relevant to future improvement of those efforts. Winston (2001a) provides insights into the identification of future leaders in the profession.

But is much of this focus on selecting a subset of library employees to be developed further as leaders really necessary? A growing literature challenges many of the traditional views of leadership and has produced a variety of alternative leadership models. Many of the newer approaches focus on leadership development in all employees and on alternative styles of leadership that may include a whole repertoire of styles a leader may employ depending on circumstances. (See, for example, Badaracco, 2002; Block, 1993; Drath, 2001; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002; Lipman-Blumen, 1996; Moore, 2004; Pearce & Conger, 2003; Raelin, 2003; Ray, 1999; Sample, 2002; Schwarz, 2002; Seifert & Economy, 2001; and Svara, 1994.) In our view, this plethora of writings offering alternative approaches to leadership and leadership development suggests that libraries should broaden their efforts to embrace experiments in the use of these newer approaches to leadership.

Another observation we have is that in some cases the supervisors and managers who would benefit most from further development of their supervisory, managerial, and leadership skills may actively resist training and development. We find this peculiar, since the salaries earned by most supervisors and managers are larger than those of the employees they supervise and are justified at least in part by the supervisory, managerial, and leadership skills they are expected to provide. Thach and Heinselman make a related observation in their comparison of leadership development and parent development.

In general, our approach to leadership development has been similar to our haphazard approach to the development of parents. In our society, some parents pursue development and some do not; some parents do not want to be bothered with mastering good parenting skills, but still want to be parents (that is, leaders of children). For those of us who have been parents, there is unanimous agreement that good parenting involves the mastery of a particular set of skills needed in few, if any, other endeavors. (2000, pp. 219–220)

They go on to say, “In many organizations, leadership development follows a similar course, one that relegates leadership to a low priority position on the skill ladder. We approach leadership as if anyone can do it, as if the skills are acquired by osmosis” (2000, p. 220). Given this situation, we surmise that parents without special training will most likely parent the way their parents did (or possibly in an opposite way), and that leaders without special training may lead the way they have observed past bosses lead (or possibly in opposite ways, or a combination of ways). In both cases there must be much that can be learned about best practices (or even good practices) in parenting or leadership from discussion sessions, training, or observation and/or reading.

This reluctance by established managers to further their education on leadership topics is documented by Storey. He reports on a research study in Britain: “As expected, the vast majority of senior managers (78 per cent) espouse the value of leadership as a core organizational priority, but in practice they just do not seem to get round to doing much about it at the highest levels” (2004b, p. 7).

What does it take to motivate a change in leadership behavior? Stringer (2002) addresses this issue by presenting and analyzing a case study. He concludes that, in this case at least, five observations can be made:

- “Leaders won’t change unless they see the need for change.”
- “Collecting credible, objective, hard data helps leaders see the need for change.”
- “Leadership practices aren’t ‘good-bad’ issues; they are more a matter of ‘effective-less effective.’”
- “Leaders will change their practices when they feel they have real options.”
- “Leadership skills can be learned.” (Stringer 2002, pp. 112–117)

How can we help to ensure that all employees participate in leadership development and other training and development programs? Should the employment contract (written or verbal) specifically say that the employee will regularly refresh his or her knowledge of supervisory, management, and leadership knowledge?

Of course, there is also continuous pressure on those who design and present leadership development programs to update their offerings in response to participant feedback and the results of educational and leader-

ship research (Ready & Conger, 2003; Tyler, 2004). Much has been written proposing ways to improve these programs, including works by Ayman, Adams, Fisher, and Hartman (2003); Mumford and Manley (2003); and Schriesheim (2003). During the 1990s several libraries began to offer leadership training programs developed by Stephen Covey to their staff (see, for example, Covey, 1989). Some of his programs offer a relatively new 360-degree feedback assessment as part of the leadership development process. This tool combines evaluations of the program participants by their supervisors, peers, and employees who report directly to them.

The use of such 360-degree feedback has become a standard part of many leadership development programs, and many researchers have investigated the effectiveness of such instruments. Do these assessment tools lead to improved leadership performance? Recent papers by Atwater, Brett, and Waldman (2003) and Conger and Toegel (2003) summarize much of that research and conclude that 360-degree feedback produces the intended improvements in some recipients but does not work for others. Occasionally there are unintended consequences, where valuable employees are discouraged by the process and/or results and choose to move on to another organization. Some of the recommendations to remedy this situation include paying more attention to how the raters of the participant are instructed in how to complete the assessment inventory and how the assessment results are presented to the participant.

This research result corroborates the experience at one library that mandated 360-degree feedback as part of a multiday leadership program. Administrators were somewhat surprised when a few excellent employees refused to participate if the training required such feedback. While it is evident this new assessment tool has many positive features, there are some drawbacks that can be addressed and refined. This is one example, relating to just one aspect of leadership development, where research results are valuable and can lead to further improvements in the ways we improve the skills of current and future leaders.

THE FUTURE OF OD AND THE FUTURE OF OD IN LIBRARIES

The discipline of OD appears healthy, based at least on ongoing vigorous debate about both the premises and the future of the discipline. As one example, beginning in 1999 the *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* provided space for debate on whether it was time for organizational development to evolve into a new discipline: change management (Worren, Ruddle, & Moore, 1999; Farias & Johnson, 2000; Worren, Ruddle, & Moore, 2000; Hornstein, 2001). Additional viewpoints on the future of OD are contained in Carnevale (2003); Church, Waclawski, and Berr (2002); and Wheatley, Tannenbaum, Griffin, and Quade (2003). Libraries have a natural role to play in the continued evolution of OD, particularly as environments in which both library staff and OD researchers can try new approaches,

evaluate results, and share experiences via conference presentations, the library/information science literature, and the OD literature.

CONCLUSION

Libraries exist to serve users in a fluid environment of evolving expectations, technological influences, and institutional imperatives. As organizations, libraries have always understood their unique role in society and in their parent institutions—always with the mission to serve regardless of the environment. The rapid pace of environmental change requires that libraries become more adept at forecasting the future and in redefining and redesigning themselves organizationally to meet new and sometimes daunting challenges. We do not have to start from the beginning; much relevant work has been done. Our challenge is to become more active in producing and sharing the research (and subsequent models) necessary to inform libraries as they adopt new and expanded roles in a dynamic real world.

In this article we have focused on OD, change, and leadership. The literature of all three of these fields reflects a state of flux and often includes conflicting points of view on such topics as how effective OD is, where that field is headed, what the most effective change model is, what the most effective leadership style is, and how leaders should be developed. What we can say about these fields is that they have a definite relationship to both current and future operations of libraries, and we cannot wait for all the dust to settle. We must choose what seems appropriate from existing research results and apply it in our libraries—and see what happens. In essence, we are recommending that we all pay attention to the literature of several disciplines, including our own; identify from that literature actions that may improve library operations and culture; try them out; and report our experiences, both positive and negative, within and beyond our community.

One of the authors recently visited Big Bend National Park in west Texas. As part of a field trip, one of the park rangers publicly commented “In many parks we encourage visitors to stay on the trails. In this park, we encourage visitors to get off the trails and really explore!” The authors encourage all stakeholders in the future of libraries to “get off the trails,” see what they can discover about improving library organizations, and share their discoveries broadly.

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