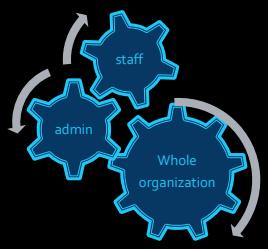


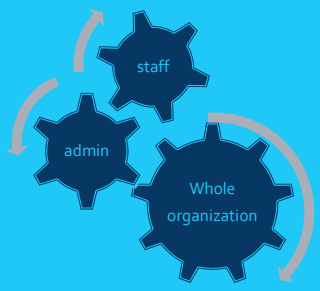
Leading Regardless of Your Role:

Influencing the Culture of Your Library Organization

Wouldn't it be nice if . . . ?

We worked in an organization where the daily environment was saturated with the following:

- Competence
- Civility
- Trust
- Respect
- Optimism



Who is responsible for the prevailing atmosphere in your workplace?

What does *leading* mean?

Leading

- Influencing outcomes
- Helping to change or stabilize the culture
- Being a role model for others
- Recognizing opportunities
- Determining the workplace environment
- Making daily choices about the quality of your life

Key leadership characteristics

- Character
- Commitment & acting responsibly
- Competence
- Generosity of spirit
- Initiative & risk taking
- Positive attitude & trust
- Self-discipline & emotional intelligence
- Good manners & respect for all others

Risk Taking – sticking your neck out!

You can be "riskless" or "reckless"
Neither is the best option
Where do you fall on the continuum from one to the other?
What influences our risk taking stance in general? Regarding change & work?

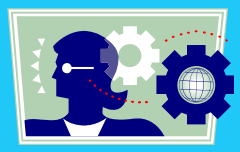
Riskless — Overly cautious → **Appropriate** ↔ Overly daring — **Reckless** ←

Emotional intelligence

Emotional intelligence: The ability to manage ourselves & our relationships effectively. (D. Gorman, 1998. *Working with Emotional Intelligence*.)

It consists of 4 fundamental capacities:

1. Self-awareness
2. Self-management
3. Social awareness
4. Social skills



Self-awareness & self-management are absolutely essential to be a leader (to influence others).

Emotional Intelligence in detail

Self-awareness
- Emotional self-awareness
- Accurate self-awareness
- Self-confidence

Self-management
- Self-control
- Trustworthiness
- Conscientiousness
- Adaptability
- Achievement orientation
- Initiative

Emotional Intelligence continued

Social awareness
- Empathy
- Organizational awareness
- Service orientation

Social skills
- Influence
- Developing others
- Communication
- Change catalyst
- Conflict management
- Building bonds
- Teamwork & collaboration

Empathy is a fundamental skill

Being able to put yourself in the other's shoes.

Recognizing the other as a whole person.

Recognizing the emotional content of a situation.

Being able to honor difference while working together.

Influence is not a bad word!

Influence: the act or power of producing an effect without apparent exertion of force or direct exercise of command; to affect or alter by indirect or intangible means; to sway; to have an effect on the condition or development of; to modify . . .
(Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 10th ed. 2001)

Some equate influence with the ability to motivate. In many instances influence is not consciously exerted or received but is still effective.

Steps for effective influence

1. Establish credibility
   - Expertise
   - Relationships
2. Frame of common ground
3. Provide evidence
4. Connect emotionally

Important thing is to be able to relate your hopes & position to other's own concerns & hopes.

(Conger, J. A. (1998) "The necessary art of persuasion." Harvard Business Review, May-June, 1998.)

Why use your influence?

1 Answer: To make a difference!

Some of us have the ability to be either a very good saint or a very bad sinner.

Which will you be for your library?

OR

Use your influence for positive outcomes in the organization & society.

Developing others

Training – Is most often direct action & interaction to assist others in being successful at doing things.

Mentoring – Is serving as official or unofficial guide to help individual achieve success.

Sponsoring – When appropriate, lending your name & support to help someone move forward.

Coaching – Is providing encouragement, advice for improvements in specific areas.

Modeling – Is being a role model; being the best you can be as often as possible.

Communication: Effectively sending & receiving the message

Nonverbal communication is +90% of message

- Body language (movement & posture)
- Gaze (where our eyes are directed)
- Touching (who, when, how we touch others)
- Facial expressions (smile, frown, grimace . . .)
- Personal space (invisible bubble around person)
- Body posture (occupied space, restless, at rest, relaxed/formal, etc.)
- Decoding abilities (ability to figure out what is being "said" by the other)

Communication: Verbal

While less than 10% of verbal message sent is the message received, it is still crucial.

- Talkativeness (how much, how long one holds floor)
- Voice quality (intonation, pitch, accent, volume)
- Content of speech (what we talk about, vocabulary, grammar, verbose/concise)

Active listening & attending to the messages, both nonverbal and verbal is essential.

Conflict management

Is constructive when:

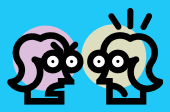
- Results in clarification of important issues
- Results in solutions to problems
- Involves people in resolving issues of importance to them
- Causes authentic communication
- Helps release emotion, anxiety, & stress
- Builds cooperation among people through learning about each other
- Helps individuals develop understanding & skills

Conflict management

Conflict is destructive when it:

- Takes attention away from other important activities.
- Undermines morale or self-concept.
- Polarizes people & groups, reducing cooperation.
- Increases or sharpens differences.
- Leads to irresponsible & harmful behavior.

  (fighting, name-calling, pouting, & . . . ?)



Conflict management styles

Avoidance – Leaves conflict unresolved & does not allow for rational conflict.

Smoothing – Leads people to believe they can get away with things.

Authority – Way to win the battle but loose the war.

Compromise – No one gets it all, no one comes out feeling good about solution.

Problem-solving – Working together as conflict is problem to be solved rather than a battle to be won.

To summarize:

It is up to you regardless of your position to make the workplace the one you want to live in 40 hours a week. To that end:
Be optimistic.
Respect & trust others.
Competently fulfill your work responsibilities.
Improve your own emotional intelligence by:

- Knowing & managing yourself & being clear about your goals.
- Modeling the best of yourself for others.
- Assisting & encouraging others in appropriate attitudes & behaviors.
- Exercising positive & appropriate influence within the organization.
- Communicating clearly and authentically.
- Learning to use constructive conflict management skills.

Go forth & lead from the middle!

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