

Get On The Balcony



UNC GREENSBORO

University Libraries

Michael Crumpton, Nakia Hoskins, & Suzanne Sawyer

Who We Are



Michael "Mike" Crumpton
Interim Dean of Libraries



Nakia Hoskins
Community Engagement Associate

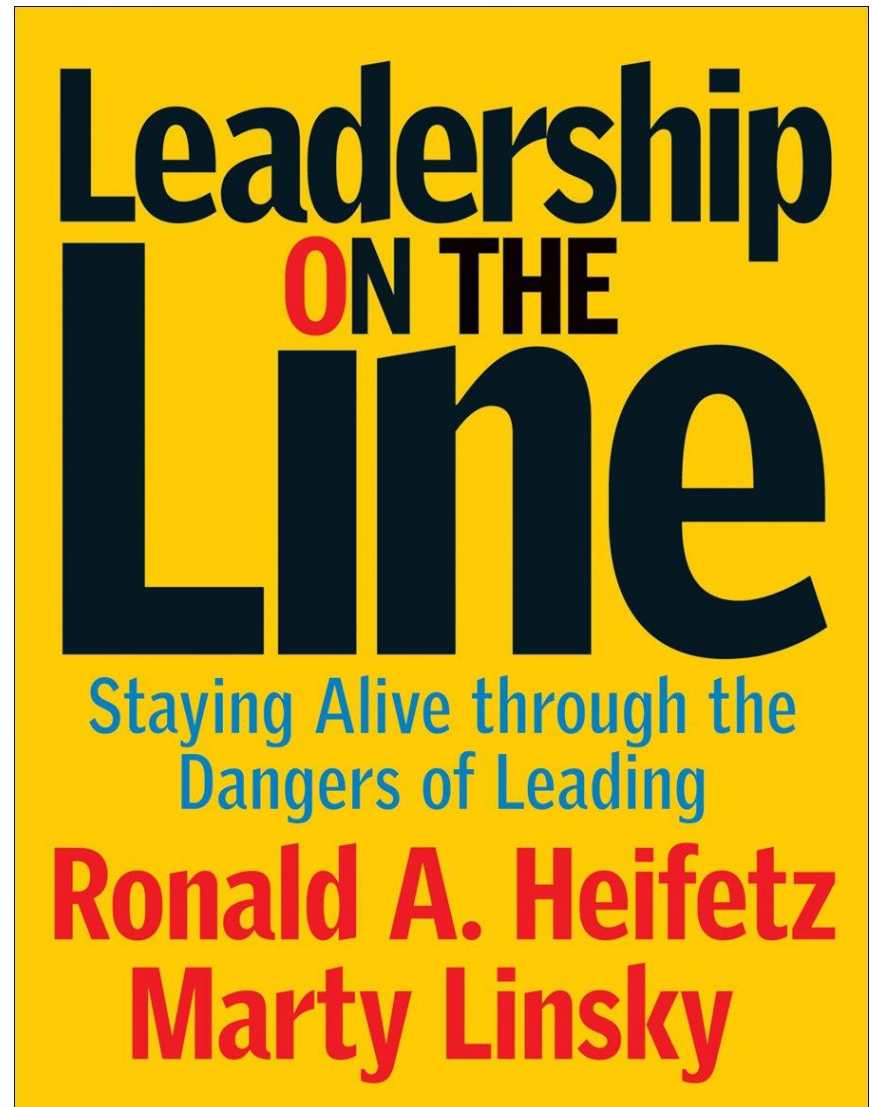


Suzanne Sawyer
Preservation Specialist

What does it mean to “get on the balcony”?

“Few practical ideas are more obvious or more critical than the need to get perspective in the midst of action.”

- Heifetz & Linsky

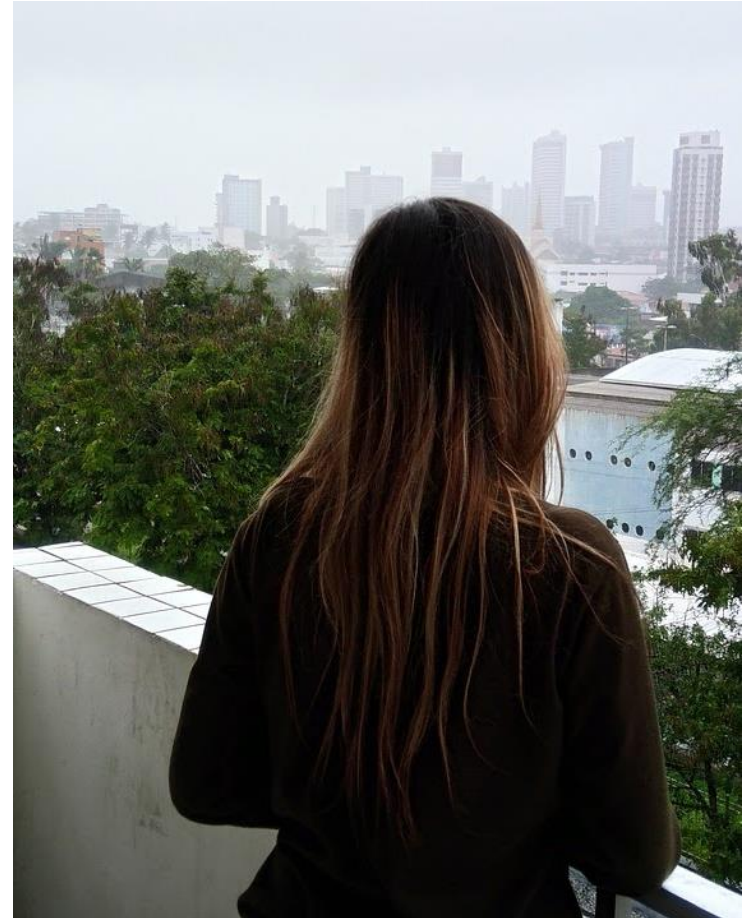


Gaining perspective

- Stepping back to gain perspective on the dance floor isn't just about finding problems. It is also about recognizing, reinforcing, and replicating good work.

Anyone can get on the balcony...

- The balcony is not a corner office for the elite, it is simply about stepping back from the action to gain perspective.



PedroA13 (pixabay.com)

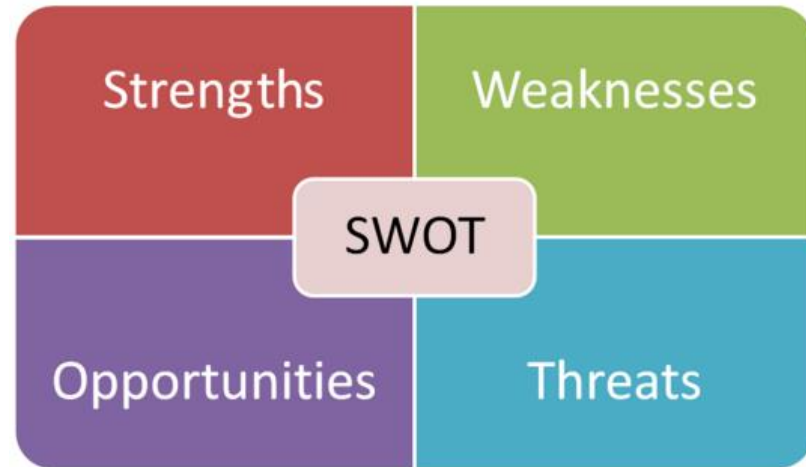
Case Study Process

- Formation of task forces misunderstood
- Survey of Staff
- Retreat of leadership
- SWOT analysis
- SHRA breakout sessions



SWOT Analysis

- A SWOT analysis is a compilation of your company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The primary objective of a SWOT analysis is to help organizations develop a full awareness of all the factors involved in making an organizational changes and devising a strategic plan.
- Our results highlighted:
 - Strengths = impact, economic and student success
 - Weaknesses = communication, staff recognition
 - Opportunities = campus actions and goals
 - Threats = budget, retention of talent



Concerns Surfaced

- Inequity of processes such as travel
- Lack of transparency or misunderstanding on career advancement
- Unequal distribution of information through the chain of command
- Lack of vision or focus on the library's mission
- Concerns over Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) issues



Rankism

“Rankism is the exploitation or humiliation of those with less power or lower status.” – Robert W. Fuller

- Nomenclature; unnecessary differences in how employees are treated; token inclusion
- Embedding recognition in communication; professional development opportunities, including mentorship; meaningful engagement



The Silo Effect

- The **Silo Effect** refers to a lack of information flowing between groups or parts of an organization, which can lead to decreased productivity and efficiency.
- Silos can be caused
 - Communication
 - Intra & Inter departmental
 - Hierarchical/rankism
 - Procedures & routines
 - Workflow
 - Workplace culture
 - Unintentionally
 - Geographically



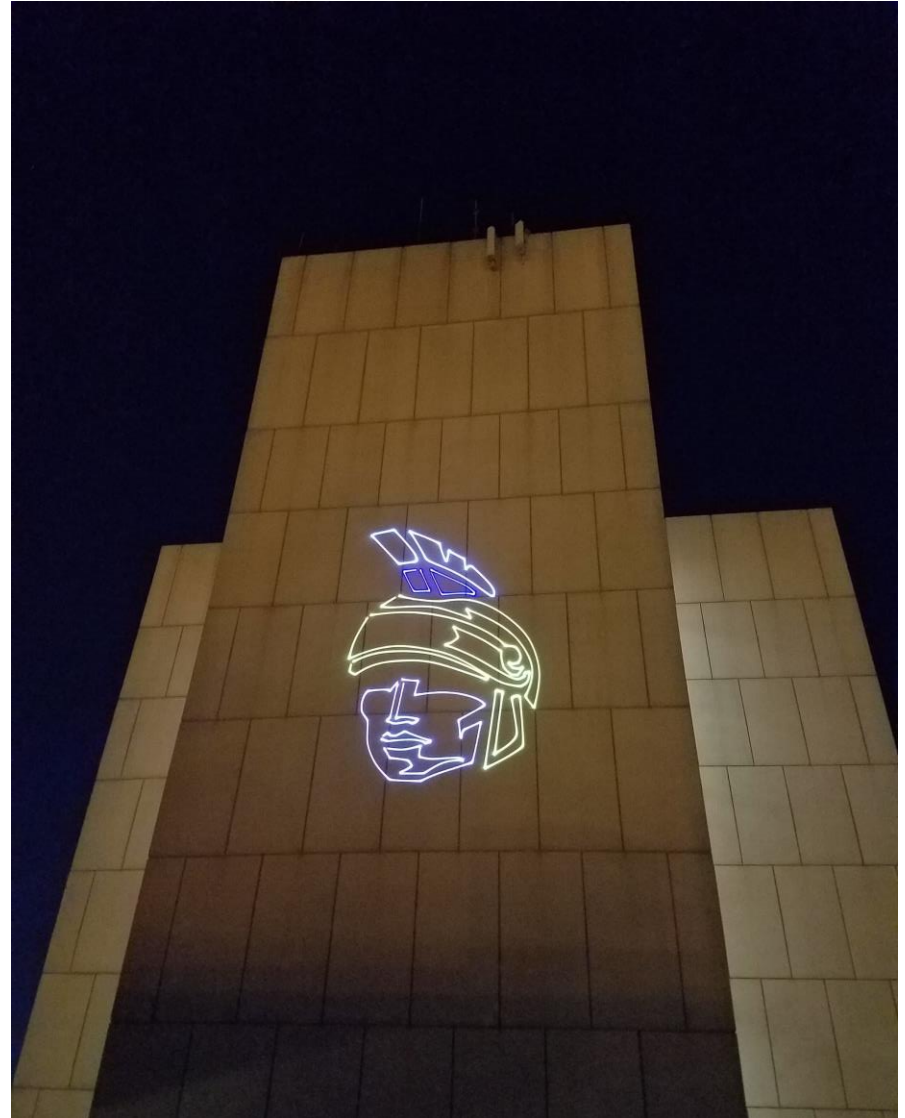
Why we need to see from the Balcony



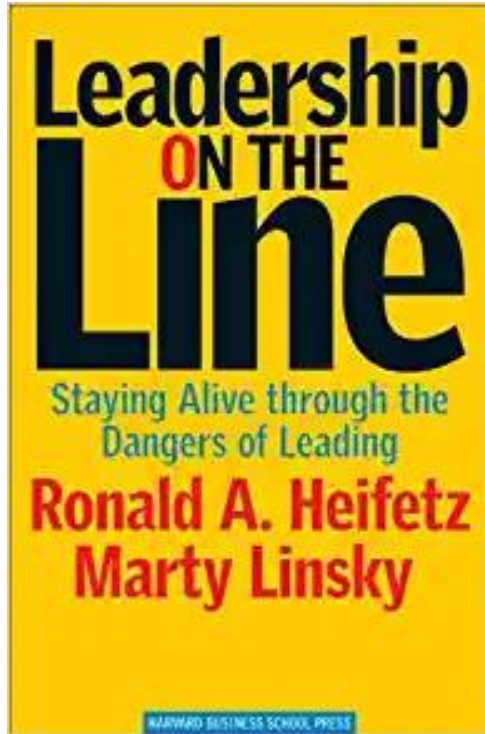
- Staff concerns mixed over big picture issues with state budgets, campus changes, etc. with library organizational internal issues
- Communication not clear as to how different employee types are impacted by decisions being made and what their role should be
- Excitement over Master Space Planning process misunderstood by intended process
- Professional treatment of everyone's contribution to the success of the organization questionable

What we hope to learn from the broader view that the balcony offers

- How communication is executed across the organization
- How roles are valued regardless of status
- How career ladders should work in this environment
- What should be the vision that unites everyone into a common mission



From the book...



- “Exercising leadership is an expression of your aliveness... But when you cover yourself up, you risk losing something as well. In the struggle to save yourself, you can give up too many of those qualities that are the essence of being alive, like innocence, curiosity, and compassion.”
— Ronald A. Heifetz
- “You appear dangerous to people when you question their values, beliefs, or habits of a lifetime. You place yourself on the line when you tell people what they need to hear rather than what they want to hear. Although you may see with clarity and passion a promising future of progress and gain, people will see with equal passion the losses you are asking them to sustain.”
— Martin Linsky



When taking others with you...

- Broaden perspectives
- See other points of view
- Create transparency leadership
- Show respect for the process



Strategies & Future Work to be Done: “Empowering from Within”



- GOAL: To be a healthy organization in order to provide the best services for our users and community.
- In keeping with theme, we are continuously inviting people to the balcony to see the organization, which will mean breaking through some barriers (personal, hierarchical)
- How are we providing opportunities for people to get on the balcony?
 - Share out meetings
 - Infrastructure revamping (committees, task forces, etc)
 - Programs & workshops (staff development week, personnel book club, EDI workshops,)



Join us on the balcony



“Culture surrounds us all, and we need to understand how it is created, embedded, developed, manipulated, managed, and changed. The primary mission of the libraries is...[to] enable the teaching-learning process and research. In order to fulfill this mission, the libraries must have a staff that is qualified, informed, well trained, dedicated, and appreciated.” – Panda & Mandal

Panda, K., & Mandal, M. (2006). Corporate culture in libraries and information centers to promote “knowledge-based business” in it era. *Library Management*, 27(6-7), 446-459.



Contact us:

- Mike Crumpton, (336) 256-1213, macrumpt@uncg.edu
- Nakia Hoskins, (336) 256-0107, nakia.hoskins@uncg.edu
- Suzanne Sawyer, (336) 334-5145, s_sawyer@uncg.edu



UNC GREENSBORO

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UNC Greensboro University Libraries
PO Box 26170 | Greensboro, NC 27402
(336) 334-5304 | library.uncg.edu

