

Fostering the Evolution of Library Roles through Reframing

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Thacker, J., Sawyer, S., & Jennings, K.N. (2021). Fostering the Evolution of Library Roles through Reframing. In M.A. Crumpton & N.J. Bird (Ed.). *Emerging Human Resource Trends in Academic Libraries* (p.241-255). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

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Abstract:

In the previous chapter, we began with a discussion about how end users view each and every library employee as a librarian. "When people are seeking help in your library, YOU are a librarian," stated former youth services consultant for the State Library of North Carolina and current University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) library and information science (LIS) lecturer Lori Special.¹ The typical library user sees someone who can provide assistance or services or help them solve a problem; to them, every library employee is a librarian, regardless of rank or title or affiliation.

Interactions such as the one described above have prompted academic library leadership to shift priorities over the past decade from a department-centered service model to a user-centered one. The more traditional model still exists, as libraries were once primarily concerned with the stewardship of physical collections and users relied upon library employee knowledge to access these resources. The physical collections' growth in academic libraries has diminished exponentially as the vast majority of library collection budgets are spent on electronic resource licenses and related acquisitions to reflect our users' preference for accessing our collections online. However, users still rely on library workers to access physical collections even though their use is in decline. This evolution from print to electronic resource management leaves the door open for library administrators and employees to reframe the ways that they think about the role of non-MIJS degree-holding public services and other staff. The move toward single service points and roving assistance in the stacks presents an exciting opportunity for the library staff to build relationships with library users and promote the library's brand by providing personalized service anywhere at any time. This new model of user service also serves to enhance library staff knowledge holistically by way of a comprehensive professional development plan implemented and supported by the administration.

Keywords: libraries | roles

Article:

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The content presented in this chapter is meant to illuminate the potential advantages of library administration and management investing in, and empowering, staff members at all levels and the disadvantages and limitations presented by not doing so. The first section will provide context for the reframing of library roles by delving into the background and explaining the terminology used. Topics covered in this section include institutional/organizational structure and classification of roles in various settings across higher education.

Reframing of roles and the subsequent migration should be undertaken by library administration with guidance from organizational consultants, human resource specialists, or a human resources librarian. This chapter discusses ways of creating an organizational culture responsive and respectful to library worker needs as a significant aspect not to be overlooked when instituting organizational change. The next sections explain role reframing, role migration, role confusion/conflict, and role specialization. Additionally, the power dynamic created by role confusion and conflict may have far-reaching consequences.

The concept of library underemployment is presented next. The remaining sections explore the concept of leadership training for all employees, paraprofessional development, and career progression. This chapter concludes with recommended areas for further research and discussion regarding the various subjects presented.

Background and terminology

For the purposes of this chapter, we will distinguish between types of library employees. While we recognize that different academic libraries have alternate nomenclature, the terms staff, faculty, and administration will be used. Library administration and management may be used

interchangeably as the authority to implement the institution's strategic goals, via delegation to subordinates, that are inherent to these administrative positions within the organization. Technicians, assistants, coordinators, desk managers, specialists, and program officers serve valuable roles in academic libraries. Staff or paraprofessionals (see chapter 15 for more on this) will be defined as the personnel that typically hold positions that support the organization, performing any number of tasks delegated to them by administration (and sometimes the faculty). Staff positions typically require the completion of only a high school diploma. Increasingly, however, those jobs are held by individuals by providing personalized service anywhere at any time. This new model of user service also serves to enhance library staff knowledge holistically by way of a comprehensive professional development plan implemented and supported by the administration.

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Full-time faculty members will be defined as those individuals whose primary functions are to undertake research and provide instruction and are typically referred to as librarians. These terms of faculty and librarian may also be used interchangeably in this chapter. While a doctoral degree is the standard terminal degree for tenure-track faculty positions in higher education, this is not the case for academic library faculty. Tenured and tenure-track library faculty members may not have degree attainment beyond a master of library and information science (MLIS). For all, the road to tenure is paved with a robust record of contributions to the field-disseminating research findings via publishing, conference presentations, and teaching. Full-time non-tenure-track library faculty members are not usually held to the same standards. However, most teaching positions require some evidence of job proficiency and a commitment to professional engagement. Professional association activities, including membership, committee service, conference presentation participation, and annual conference attendance, are common.

Chancellors, presidents, provosts, deans, and directors are common titles for those working in academic administration. Administrators oversee the total operations and direction of an institution. The library has its own administration or administrative structure. In both administrative configurations, a doctoral degree and academic experience and documented research are desired prerequisites for many administrative positions, though administrators with single and dual master's degree levels of education exist. Not all administrators rise through faculty career progression or laddering, yet some administrators take on-or may continue-their roles as instructors in addition to their other responsibilities if they are deemed academically qualified. In addition to academic degree requirements, professional development requirements at the administrative ranks vary widely across higher education. It is understood that the vice chancellor for human resources will not be held to the same standards for performance and professional engagement as the university's provost.

Administrators are at the top of the organizational chart, followed by the faculty (including those with faculty rank) and other staff members respectively at an academic institution with a top-down organizational structure. Recognizing these rank distinctions is important because, as they exist today in academic libraries (and elsewhere), they reinforce stratification, codification, and hierarchical structure; they typically do not promote the roles of all library workers equitably. The power dynamics that exist at each level internally and externally are a direct result of the institutional organizational structure as well as the level of education attained.

Role reframing

Role reframing is defined as a change in role responsibilities that occurs as an inevitable result of technological extinction often aided by technological advancement requiring not only a different set of abilities but also a much broader role perspective and expectations. Library managers should remember that reframing is not limited to technical and procedural knowledge.

Awareness training related to diverse topics such as leadership, self-awareness, diversity, wellness, responsive user services, and collaboration skills are dominant themes in career development of academic libraries. Unfortunately, much of the career development resources to cultivate these skills are exclusively accessible to librarians. Academic library public services staff members, the face of the institution, interact with library users just as often, if not more so, than our MLIS degree-holding colleagues. Norene Erickson and Lisa Shamchuk assert that "courses focusing on particular populations of users, especially marginalized groups, that help

expose the paraprofessional to social justice and responsibility concepts would better reflect current industry trends."²

Paralibrarians working in public services are charged with embodying the values of the institution. The interactions that occur within that realm set the stage for user perceptions about our ideals, roles, purpose, and the services that we provide--our brand. Right now, American colleges and universities are undergoing unprecedented growth among students from diverse backgrounds, especially those from ethnic minority populations. The academy supports disciplines devoted to the study of gender equality, gender identity and sexual orientation issues via classroom instruction, community outreach initiatives, and awareness training. Available courses also include ethnic and disability studies on many university campuses. "The share of nonwhite undergraduate students increased from 28% to 45% between fall 1997 and fall 2017," asserts Leslie Davis and Richard Fry.³ Library administration must understand that dialogue regarding the challenges faced by historically marginalized communities and solutions to ameliorate them need not be restricted to traditional academic faculty and students. As the principal nexus of campus learning, the academic library has an ethical obligation to provide accurate, courteous, equitable, unbiased access to information to all users. This responsibility encompasses all employees working within our academic libraries as they comprise some of our most critical users. While some libraries provide customer service training, specific and dedicated DEI (diversity/equity/inclusion) training centered on intercultural awareness, microaggressions, and unconscious bias should be required. Reframing courses to incorporate DEI themes into lessons using similar strategies that librarians or library faculty employ while teaching information literacy to students should be done with the support of library administration/management. As demographic shifts continue to affect American universities, the significance of the ability of library workers to deftly navigate these changes through ongoing access to comprehensive cultural awareness training cannot be understated, Library administrators and managers need to be out in front of these trends.

Access services and technical services departments have undergone substantial changes and have been reframing roles for a few decades now as digital automation continues to dramatically affect the work of these core functional areas. For example, in the past, patrons requesting a hold on a book had no choice but to make the request in person at a checkout desk during library operating hours. Today, those requests can be conveniently made from a web-enabled mobile device using their campus ID/login via a discovery interface on the library's home page. Access services staff run reports in order to determine which books need to be pulled from shelves to fulfill hold requests. The request is unmediated, and the work involved often hidden from public view.

In technical services, manual check-in procedures for physical serials have been replaced by the use of electronic management systems to process as well as provide access to online serials, and the technical services staff has the ability to run reports using tools provided by those e-resource management systems. It is technological advancements like these that drive the need for ongoing role reframing. The adoption of new automated procedures across academic libraries has required existing paralibrarians to acquire new skills in order to complete those tasks. We recommend that library administrators and managers examine and reevaluate job classifications for all paralibrarian roles every three to five years to make the reframing process less arduous on both management and employees.

Role migration

Role migration can be described as the formalized end result of role reframing due to technological innovation, organizational necessity, professional trends, human ingenuity, or any amalgam of the four. An illustration of this occurrence would be an academic library's administration formally updating a job classification and submitting it to human resources for approval. In this example, the reframing that took place changed the fundamental role of the previous position in such a way that the organization created a new one in its place. Responsibilities are added, subtracted, or shared among those in the department. As workflows and policies are assessed and updated, so must the roles of the library staff that performs them. Paralibrarians look to library management for professional guidance in the creation and ongoing evaluation of these newly reframed and migrated roles. Administrators should have all the necessary tools and techniques at their disposal for successful, less integration of these new positions into the organization culture.

Role confusion and role conflict

Role confusion is uncertainty over a position's responsibilities or duties. Parties at all levels of the library organization may be affected: individual job holders, managers, department heads, deans, other university departments and library users. Causes of role confusion include but are not limited to these sources: job unfamiliarity, ambiguously written job descriptions, individual personality, overlapping job responsibilities, and inconsistent organizational structure/policy administration. Role conflict can potentially arise among the affected parties for any of the reasons when a role's perceived function does not align with the role's actual function. Under the guidance of the institution's human resources department, academic library administration should be able to avoid the missteps that create role confusion and conflict during the position creation process.

Role specialization

When library staff knowledge and experience is overlooked and underutilized by administration, it may be attributed to the general, less specialized nature of their work. The opposite may be true of some of the staff due to the highly specialized nature of their work. For both groups, the perceptions of library administration and colleagues can result in underemployment. Nonetheless, administrators must realize that paralibrarian staff members are in an ideal position to assist other departments with library marketing and outreach. Management of the library's social media channels, multimedia project creation to promote library initiatives or student training, rounding up student volunteers for events, writing about their professional role for publication, and much more can be added to the job descriptions of paralibrarian staff. Quick response (QR) code generation placed on informational and promotional signage, for instance, could be a shared responsibility among public services and information technology staff members who understand how advantageous QR codes can be for libraries because they "give directions to users, provide brief descriptive information, promote library services, create links to library resources, etc."⁴ Each of these operational activities are embedded into the daily practices of public services staff, so it only stands to reason that public services staff should be responsible for their creation.

An emphasis on user experience in libraries is a natural segue for noncredentialed public services staff due to their high volume of patron interactions. "User or patron services" is

replacing what was formerly known as "circulation or access services" in some academic libraries. This change in nomenclature reflects the previously referenced shift from print to digital collections as well as the trend toward a more user-centered focus in libraries. It also represents changes within the library from a quiet, independent study space to a collaborative one bustling with activity. "User experience librarianship works to ensure that our systems, spaces, services, and resources help people work in the best ways for them, by gathering evidence and creating compelling narratives and processes to drive change,"⁵ according to UX librarian, Kelly Dagan. Public services staff may be best suited to perform these assessments. They understand how library users utilize the spaces and resources via transactions and observation. They recognize patterns of use, engagement, and behavior that may go unnoticed by other library staff. Public services staff members also potentially possess the ability to foster ongoing relationships with library users. When librarians and other credentialed professional staff create questionnaires for our users, they should be encouraged by management to do so with the input of the public services staff. They can create the survey as well as facilitate its distribution among different user groups when provided with the required knowledge to do so as not to taint the results.

Underemployment

Underemployment is defined as the situation "when workers are employed in jobs which are substandard relative to their goals and expectations," as stated by psychologist Douglas C. Maynard and business professor Daniel C. Feldman.⁶ As we have discussed, there are many factors that contribute to the underemployment of paraprofessionals and librarians, including (but not limited to) an individual's job qualifications, geographic labor market saturation, and the prevalence of contingent labor on university campuses. This section will focus on those external factors out of the control of academic library employees. These trends are major obstacles to library workers maintaining financial stability and finding meaningful, purposeful work in the field.

Reference and instruction librarian Peter Brunette states, "With an MLIS, many librarians may be seen as overqualified for paraprofessional work, and hiring committees may assume that librarians with an MLIS may not stick around for long once a better job comes along."⁷ MLIS degree holders may choose to take a paraprofessional position in the academic library hoping to successfully obtain a full-time librarian position. However, some hiring authorities in academic libraries may balk at hiring those with greater qualifications than required for monetary reasons as well. Accepting a paraprofessional role comes with the expectation that the salary will be lower than that of a librarian, but those with an MLIS may anticipate (rightly or wrongly) a higher starting salary than someone occupying the role with less education. If management chooses to hire the individual at the desired pay rate, they should take the opportunity to reassess all paraprofessional positions as a part of a comprehensive career progression plan that includes periodic job reclassification.

The labor market for academic librarians can be yet another formidable barrier to face, and we contend that the same holds true for paraprofessionals looking to work in academic settings in which salaries tend to be higher than for their colleagues working in public or school libraries. Overall, there are more librarian candidates applying for coveted full-time, professional jobs than actual jobs available to those candidates, particularly in areas with graduate programs in library and information sciences, making competition for jobs remarkably tough regardless of how

much experience or skills a candidate may possess. Access to the "right" networks is key for any job seeker.⁸ This can be a boon for some administrators who are alumni of library programs in which the university's library is looking to fill these scarce positions. However, a significant number of competent, energetic new LIS graduates will invariably be denied such positions. Additionally, this perpetuates issues associated with equity and inclusion-especially when individuals may be unaware of the importance of informal networks for job seekers.

The promise of "there will be a lot of retirements soon, so jobs will open up" has been heard for decades, and often when the time comes, full-time jobs become multiple part-time jobs or may even be eliminated completely according to Brunette.⁹ Academic libraries are under constant pressure to do less with more. To that end, the "adjunct-ification" of many former tenure-track full-time positions on college campuses has spread to the academic library in which research assistants, interns, and temporary employees help to fill gaps- at a much cheaper rate than full-time employees. While we recognize the benefits of contingent labor, we also recognize the disadvantages to the underemployed professionals that occupy those roles, including less money, lack of benefits, and the resulting stress caused by job instability. For this reason, we recommend that library management be strategic in recruitment and hiring practices for contingent workers.

Reframing employee empowerment

The concept of allowing workers freedom to make needed decisions and actions- "empowerment"----cuts across various industries and workplaces. It affects employees at multiple levels, and the desire for self-regulation and achievement are relationally interlinked. For employees to feel they are an integral part of the organization-and a part of the change management process-empowerment matters.

According to recent work from Harvard Business School, "Research has regularly demonstrated that when employees feel empowered at work, it is associated with stronger job performance, job satisfaction, and commitment to the organization."¹⁰ Academic libraries can provide empowering and encouraging work cultures by promoting cross-teaming and communication and strategic planning that embraces the interconnectedness of tasks and focuses on user and employee experiences. This builds trust, investment, and organizational commitment from all levels of employees. With so many constant changes in information delivery and library services, empowering employees to embrace change requires investment; it should not be "something that happened to them." Rather, it should embrace and illustrate why individual roles matter-and how each role is related to the overall mission of the academic library. Context matters. With limited information and minimal encouragement from library leadership, employees may feel stuck or stagnant.

It is also important to acknowledge that not all generations of employees view the concept of empowerment in the same way. While previous generations may have begrudgingly "paid their dues" and/or "simply done what they were told," those of later generations incorporate self-actualization, individualism, and interdependence in work culture. This can sometimes cause intergenerational conflict among employees. Yet, if all employees in an organization understand and recognize the opportunity to enact change, influence policy, and promote teamwork, it creates a positive-and productive- working environment.

Leadership training for all

Leadership training for existing managers and supervisors holding positional authority in libraries is popular and will likely remain so in the near future. Obviously, this phenomenon is not lost on library administrators as they often participate in leadership workshops and education. However, they ought to provide the same resources to their staff regardless of level. According to Erickson and Shamchuk, "It would also be beneficial if management and administration courses were expanded to include topics such as leadership theory beyond introductory, practical-based content."¹¹ Effective instruction and also effective management rest upon the skills of the individuals charged with executing them.

Paralibrarian professional development

Library and information studies associate professor Dr. Christina Neigel states, "Different levels of education are rewarded with different kinds of privileges, including access to professional development funds and time."¹² Library management needs to commit to taking concrete, measurable steps to address the rankism that has so profoundly taken root in many of our academic institutions that effectively marginalizes a large portion of non-MLIS credentialed library employees preventing them from becoming fully self-actualized individuals who embody the ideals of the library.

Role reframing, as well as any potential role migration that occurs as a result of it, may be out of reach for many library workers who lack postgraduate degrees because they have a harder time obtaining the necessary resources and institutional buy-in to make it a reality. Regarding continuing education programs, Neigel states, "These programs become part of an expensive credentialing system that not everyone can afford and, therefore, access."¹³ It should be noted that full-time staff working in many state-funded (and a good number of private) academic libraries are typically provided the opportunity to enroll in a limited number of credit-bearing undergraduate, graduate or graduate level courses each academic year at no charge upon admission into a university program. Not every staff member is willing or able to take on such a tremendous (and/or financially challenging and time-intensive) commitment, and managers ought not to assume that this means these staff members do not actively seek professional engagement to grow in their current roles without taking the traditional academic route.

Fortunately, there is no shortage of national/state library associations, state government libraries, and other library-adjacent organizations that offer free learning opportunities for paralibrarian professional development that may provide growth opportunities for (and be of interest to) library staff. Academic library administrators should explore these options as a starting point in creating an evolving, comprehensive career development plan for non-MLIS holding employees. Live webinars, in-person information sessions, massive open online courses (MOOCs), library support staff certification programs, leadership institutes, scholarship award opportunities, conferences, and so forth can be found in a variety of places online. The American Library Association's (ALA) Library Support Staff Colleague Connection website houses an alphabetic list of state library paraprofessional and staff organizations that are a part of ALA's Library Support Staff Resource Center.¹⁴ Library Journal's website offers high-quality professional development resources covering a wide array of topics relevant to all library staff.¹⁵ OCLC's WebJunction creates and hosts similarly valuable resources, including courses on everything from space use to advocacy.¹⁶ Library leadership understands better than most that access to much high-quality, paid continuing education resources is tied to an active national, regional, or state library organization membership. Some publicly funded institutions are legally

prohibited from using public funds to cover the costs of professional membership for any employees. This restriction creates yet another barrier for paralibrarian staff. However, opportunities to develop interpersonal and technical skills may be freely available through their respective institutions and/or university system human resource departments. A human resources librarian or human resources department should be able to provide guidance to library administrators and managers seeking free and low-cost professional engagement. Administrators managing smaller institutions and budgets should not use lack of money as an excuse not to invest in their non-librarian employees.

Neigel states that many of her former library students "rely on free webinars, volunteer work, and other self-resourced means to stay relevant."¹⁷ Shrinking library budgets coupled with rapidly accelerating tuition costs create barriers to education acquisition for library employees of all levels. It is reasonable to assume that those impediments are compounded for support staff members who earn far less money and whose positions usually do not afford them access to professional networks and often limit professional development funds. These individuals experience a dilemma where they do not have enough money to pay for services that would give them a market "edge," according to Neigel.¹⁸ Twenty-first-century library administrators are aware of these impediments and find realistic solutions to remove them—such as career coaching or promoting scholarship opportunities for non-MLIS-holding workers.

A simple Google search yields many paid and free professional development resources for paralibrarian staff. However, their singular focus on practical competency rather than knowledge acquisition is ubiquitous. Frances Davidson-Arnott and Deborah Key found that "the education of library technicians, who are largely referred to in the literature as paraprofessionals, has been described as "emphasizing the 'how to' rather than the 'why.'"¹⁹ This differs from the professional development available to library faculty. Library and information technology professors Erickson and Shamchuk contend that "it would also be beneficial if management and administration courses were expanded to include topics such as leadership theory beyond introductory, practical-based content."²⁰ One might perceive the academic library administration's limited investment in the professional growth of non-MLIS degree-holding library employees as evidence that their roles are not as important as those of librarians/library faculty. The ALA's Code of Ethics decrees that library workers "advocate for conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions."²¹ Establishing meaningful, sustained career development opportunities for paralibrarian staff is endemic to our profession; administrators must keep that concept at the forefront of their minds when designing development for role change. Role reframing and migration are integral components of the academic library's fulfillment of its stated values. However, when managers fall short of providing robust and relevant professional development to all their staff, they are not living up to those values and the paralibrarian suffers the consequences. Neigel laments the "irony that many who work to aid the most marginalized are themselves marginalized."²² This conundrum is an especially troublesome reality for those working within academic libraries because it operates in direct opposition to the democratizing pro-education ideals that many institutions of higher learning espouse. It is imperative that library managers not allow administrative apathy to creep into the organizational culture by being proactive and involving the paralibrarian staff in the reframing process.

Career progression

At the heart of any academic library's mission is the desire to foster education, provide access to information, and assist in the development of their students into lifelong learners. Most often, the faculty must also be lifelong learners as they continue to conduct research, write, present, and pursue tenure. The staff, integral members of the library ecosystem, sometimes fall through the cracks in terms of professional development and career progression. Understandably, supervisors often prioritize mentoring library faculty due to the requirements of the tenure process. Though not every staff member is interested in furthering their education beyond the requirements of their current position as they may be quite happy right where they are, many staff members do wish to continue their development and education. They may wish to pursue professional development opportunities and either seek a promotion within their current position or pursue other positions when they are at the top rank possible in their current role. Supervisors have an obligation to non-faculty employees to encourage their careers too. Career progression can be defined as undertaking specific actions to grow in one's field or area of expertise. If professional development exists on a continuum, career progression is the final piece of it. Role migration follows role reframing, and career progression and subject mastery follow role migration. Career progression for academic librarians is expected and often a requirement in many academic institutions. Academic librarians of all classifications are strongly encouraged to stay abreast of emerging theories, practice, and technologies by undertaking some of the same professional development activities as tenure-track teaching faculty. However, what does career progression mean for paraprofessional staff of the academic library?

Public services staff career progression is directly tied to current library trends and the developing needs and preferences of their constituencies. Diminished circulation of traditional print materials has caused trepidation among some paraprofessional staff concerned that their positions may be eliminated. However, other staff members view these trends as opportunities for professional growth and to better fulfill the academic library's mission. This topic was explored earlier in the role specialization section. An example of the evolving service model is the movement away from a fixed service point to assist library users. Public services staff and student employees have come out from behind the desk to meet library patrons where they are within the library space, providing personalized user services with the help of electronic tablets to resolve requests. This requires a comfort level and familiarity for those library workers on two fronts: technological and personal.

Young adult librarian Elizabeth Willse suggests that "hosting a technology petting zoo for staffers" can help accomplish this goal, states Celeste Peterson-Sloss.²³ A technology petting zoo is an event in which library staff members are invited to learn how to use new technology devices or applications. Library workers must also accurately decipher body language and be at ease initiating contact with users. Public services staff members without MLIS degrees and the student employees that they manage benefit from this new model of service because it provides the opportunity to expand existing technological and customer services skills. Management must be committed to understanding the preferences and knowledge deficiencies of the paraprofessional staff to provide job-enriching experiences like this for potential career progression.

Employees with a clear progression plan are more motivated and productive as they understand what they need to do to move forward in status or in pay increases. There should be no ambiguity. And even though there is not always adequate funding, there are plenty of ways supervisors can support staff members in pursuing their goals other than by providing funding. Allowing work time to pursue career goals is one example. Clearly, the work of the library must

still be accomplished, but allowing a staff member to devote an agreed-upon amount of time toward professional development activities, such as writing an article or preparing a presentation, is essential for staff members to be able to grow. That time is built into the schedules of library faculty, so it is necessary to help paraprofessional staff members carve out time, when possible, to pursue their goals within the workday. Supervisors may find that employees are more productive across the board if they are allowed the time to pursue their professional goals while on the clock.

Conclusion

Throughout the above discussion, key points of role migration, employee empowerment, and other concepts were presented regarding paraprofessionals. Staff roles, though different, are still the professional careers of those individuals; however, amounts of funding available for professional development among staff members who do not possess MLIS degrees is most often much less than that available to library faculty. This makes some sense as faculty have different requirements related to their roles, but academic libraries are in a unique position to support their staff to grow and develop professionally and must embrace that concept as organizations. Through opportunities within the library, such as cross-training, or within the university, such as tuition waivers, there are often opportunities available to those staff members who wish to further their formal education as well as low- to no-cost options for those who simply want to develop their skill set within the library. Various departments within academic libraries are regularly siloed from each other, so cross-training not only benefits the individual but also may increase communication and collaboration among departments, leading to increased organizational efficiency and morale.

Supervisors have an opportunity to support those staff members who do wish to grow in their roles and can include this type of guidance in annual goal-setting meetings as well as set aside time throughout the year to check in with employees about what resources they may need to achieve their goals. Having career progression plans in place can inspire employees to take active roles in their own development. And if the goals of those employees happen to be an eventual career outside of academic libraries, supervisors are still in the position to support staff in these progression plans. Why should a supervisor devote time and energy to employees who are not required to seek professional development opportunities and may end up leaving the library if they do further their education? We are in the business of education and access to information. Full stop.

Notes

1. Lori Special, personal communication with author, 2019.
2. Norene Erickson and Lisa Shamchuk, "Paraprofessional Library Education in Canada: An Environmental Scan / La formation paraprofessionnelle en bibliothéconomie: Un portrait de la situation." *Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science* 41, nos. 1-2 (2017): 18-41.
3. Leslie Davis and Richard Fry, "College Faculty Have Become More Racially and Ethnically Diverse, but Remain Far Less So than Students," Pew Research Center, July 21, 2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org>.

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