Chapter 5
The Role of Professional Protocols:
Recruitment, Retention, and Service

Kiyomi D. Deards
University of Nebraska – Lincoln, USA

Jolie O. Graybill
University of Nebraska – Lincoln, USA

ABSTRACT

The cultivation of professionalism is a necessary part of training the academic and research library leaders of the future. By incorporating professionalism into succession planning efforts, individuals acquire skills that will serve them across institutions as they transition between positions of power. For the purposes of this study, the aspects of professionalism were divided into four main categories: etiquette, professional behavior, personal presentation, and space (how people fill and use it). This chapter examines existing literature and contains the results of a survey of how library employees feel about professional protocols. It argues that the observance of professional protocols can impact student satisfaction as well as create a more positive work environment. Results of the survey indicate that libraries value professionalism with an emphasis on professional behavior.

INTRODUCTION

The importance of professionalism at all levels in the library work environment has been largely ignored in succession planning. Succession planning has traditionally focusesd on the grooming of individuals to lead a single organization (Nixon, 2008; Rothwell, 2005; Singer & Griffith, 2010). The need to retain individuals has also been addressed, but with a focus on grooming them for management positions within the current organization (Singer & Griffith, 2010). In reality, while people may be groomed to be successful leaders there is no guarantee in today's changing society that they will remain within that organization. Even if a person takes on a leadership role within the individual's current organization, many leadership positions within organizations change hands every five to ten years. Thus it is important to teach leaders the skills and tools to succeed not just in one institution, but across multiple institutions (Webster & Young, 2009). Additionally, the question of whether or not librarianship is a profession has been an ongoing debate within the professional literature and, more recently, on the Internet (Abbott, 1988; DeWeese, 1972; Harris, 1993; Plummer, 1903; Potter, 2010). This questioning of librarianships status as a profession often includes questioning the worth of a master's degree in library science (Potter, 2010). It has also been examined as a source of conflict between librarians and staff, who are sometimes labeled paraprofessionals (Jones & Stivers, 2004). It may appear that librarians are unique in questioning the professionalism of their discipline, however, perceived declines

in professionalism and similar questions have been raised among the clergy, financial, legal, medical, social services and other professions (Burger, 1993; Flexner, 1915; Noordegraaf, 2007; Schön, 1983).

This chapter explores professionalism across a broad spectrum of disciplines to define professional protocols. Professionalism will be examined not as a label granted by others or defined by a specific role in an institution, but as a set of behaviors and actions taken by individuals and organizations (Polk-Lepson Research Group, 2009). Protocols across professions will be discussed with a heavy emphasis on the business, medical, and sociological communities. Professional ethics will not be examined due to the substantial body of works devoted to that aspect of professionalism. A short survey was also conducted to discover how librarians ranked each type of professional protocol in terms of importance. For the purposes of this research protocols were divided into four categories: etiquette, professional behavior, personal presentation, and space (how people fill and use it). These protocols will provide guidance for libraries seeking to establish professional protocols by identifying key areas to be addressed and the protocols of concern within the library community. Establishing a more uniform set of professional protocols would lessen the perceived differences between institutional cultures and facilitate professional working environments, thus easing transitions in power at all levels. Professional protocols can also be used to ensure equitable treatment of employees by those in positions of power. Behavior that is perceived to be negative creates a negative

25 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/the-role-of-professional-protocols/99507

Related Content

Friendly, Flexible, and Fun: Non-Traditional Ideas for Learning and Engagement
Joy Oehlers, Annie Keola Kaukahi Thomasand Joyce Tokuda (2015). *Innovative Solutions for Building Community in Academic Libraries (pp. 200-223).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/friendly-flexible-and-fun/130840

Academic Library Collaborations to Strengthen Open Government Data and Expand Librarianship
Tara Das (2016). *Technology-Centered Academic Library Partnerships and Collaborations (pp. 167-193).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/academic-library-collaborations-to-strengthen-open-government-data-and-expand-librarianship/155413

Friendly, Flexible, and Fun: Non-Traditional Ideas for Learning and Engagement
Joy Oehlers, Annie Keola Kaukahi Thomasand Joyce Tokuda (2018). *Library Science and Administration: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications (pp. 810-833).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/friendly-flexible-and-fun/191542

Students' Information-Seeking Intention in Academic Digital Libraries
Faeizah Salim, Bavani Saigar, Pravin Kumar Armoham, Sarasvathy Gobalakrishnan, Michelle Yen Pin Japand Nurul Akidah Azmaya Lim (2018). *Library Science and Administration: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications (pp. 1086-1100).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/students-information-seeking-intention-in-academic-digital-libraries/191556

Preferences and Motivations of Nigerian Undergraduates in Sharing COVID-19 Information on Social Media
Oluyemi Folorunso Ayanbodeand Wole Michael Olatokun (2022). *International Journal of Library and Information Services (pp. 1-21).*
www.irma-international.org/article/preferences-and-motivations-of-nigerian-undergraduates-in-sharing-covid-19-information-on-social-media/301607