

**Chat Contributions from CSL In Session - Beyond Management: Growing Library
Staff for Organizational Effectiveness
with Sharon Morris, Colorado State Library, January 11, 2012**

Welcome exercise: Reflect on a manager you had who was great and helped you to become better. What techniques did they use?

- they mentored me
- They asked a lot of questions, didn't do a lot of instruction.
- Used my strengths
- Expect you to stretch!
- Former Director would respond to ideas by saying, "I disagree, but if you think it's a good idea let's try it and see what happens."
- Listened well. Take your thoughts and ideas seriously
- Okay to have mistakes happen as a learning curve
- She respected others' opinions, encouraged risk-taking, and framed it as, "let's see what happens--what we learn from this."
- Willing to suggest a new direction of work that wasn't my first preference.
- Are able to see strengths that I was not able to see
- A great manager I had told me once that I was wasting time running everything by them,. I should move forward, it was his job to tell me if I needed to slow down.
- So, shows some trust. Yes!
- trust and faith that I could accomplish stuff. Letting me try stuff.
- a great manager brings themselves to the conversation, is present and open about themselves and in their work with others
- able to be totally honest (which I struggle with AS a manager)
- the phrase, "play a bigger game" popped into my head as you were talking.
- Gave me opportunities to make mistakes in low-risk environments, then guided my improvements.

Chat Brainstorm – What is Management?

- projects
- Manage resources
- nuts and bolts
- timelines
- Following protocol
- administration
- project planning
- accountable
- supervise
- details
- enforce policies
- Plan, Budget, Organize, Supervise,
- Oversee task completion
- problem-solving
- sustainable structure
- Hold accountable
- taking care of details
- Command control
- present oriented
- leveraging people and other resources
- supervising, projects
- Mentor
- dotting i's and crossing t's
- daily directing
- day to day
- process focused
- Details, efficiency
- Planning and directing general operations
- logistics
- Filters information from upper management to staff
- communication
- obtaining needed resources
- teambuilding care and feeding
- good listening skills
- proactive not reactive
- trust
- nitty gritty people skills

Chat Brainstorm – What is Leadership?

- Bringer of chaos
- Inspiring
- vision
- Inspire
- vision
- New ideas
- visionary
- compelling stories
- guide
- big picture
- role model
- mentoring
- problem-solving
- manage ideas
- influence
- future oriented
- strategy
- engagement
- Facilitate innovation
- coaching
- visionary
- mentor
- Big Picture
- big picture
- Cheerleader of their team
- Visionary, Establish Direction; Motivate & Inspire
- create the future
- vision
- telling the story
- long-term directing
- motivation
- mentoring
- team oriented
- Big picture, effectiveness
- encouragement
- visioning and leading (From Gayle)
- where are we going next?
- Strategic thinking
- good listening skills
- organization/company care and feeding
- Cheerleading is about relationships.
- The cheerleader provides encouragement when staff challenged or discouraged to go on and succeed
- Traits of a good leaders:
<http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/leadchr.html>

Chat Brainstorm – How do we encourage staff to reach their potential? To reach the “required results”?

- ask them to
- Just see the Management/Leadership screen
- engaging projects
- give them permission
- given opportunities
- they have to want to do the project - yes, engagement
- Removing roadblocks that artificially stifle employees
- don't be selfish
- Taking risks with giving new opportunities to staff
- Wlking in their shoes as much as possible
- Provide guidance and structure but openness
- Encourage growth and give opportunities to move beyond the bounds of current responsibilities
- always checking in as a genuine presence
- show them the outside of the box
- freedom to have some control--no micromanaging. Trust. Mutual Respect.
- Allow followers to try and fail. You learn and remember by correcting your mistakes
- provide the tools to succeed
- get to know them, and their boundaries...
- scaffolding the learning process
- providing resources and training
- if we don't learn from the experience, THEN it's a failure.
- Find out what motivates staff and tap into those motivators
- providing the tools they need to do the project - generally includes learning something new
- Guidance, trust, and support when needed...but not micromanagement
- By example and engaging in the day to day happenings

- have people identify their own knowledge/skills gaps
- what are the "required results"? can employees identify them? can they determine them?
- then help them fill the gaps with learning opportunities
- perhaps but not necessarily as slow as bit by bit but some generally support that allow stretching with trust and confidence...hope this helps
- safe to fail. Otherwise no one would take any risks.
- "required results" are really important - have to be clear and understood by both sides!
- "can they assess the results?"
- I think we have to "own" our own growth and development
- So much of learning happens when we assess and reflect. I think it promotes learning to encourage others to assess what happened.
- GREAT point about providing the safety net.

Chat Brainstorm – Focusing on strengths rather than weaknesses (Case study: “Mark” who is unreliable in his work schedule)

- I like the part in your paper that talked about Challenging staff (vs Criticism) in their weak areas when necessary.
- appreciative intelligence!!!
- challenging staff vs. criticism is a good point and asked people to step in ways that make them better
- maybe he would prefer a part-time schedule - offer it as an option
- If the work is about the end results, can change the scheduling expectation.
- Assuring that Mark knows he is a major contributor to the team, and when he is absent, he is missed.
- maybe a flexible schedule if job allows it
- See if Mark understands how his absences affect other staff--he may not know how he is being perceived
- offer him the chance to work from home a few hours a week, esp if there's a real need for him to be at home

Chat Brainstorm – Can qualities of a managerial leader diminish staff? Allowing staff to lead.

- Wow! This really takes pressure off the leader.
- So important to allow others to have that GREAT idea!

- very true, it goes back to the earlier discussion about providing opportunities
- i can definitely frame one of my management experiences in this way - "overperforming" leads to others underperforming
- You absolutely need to leverage those qualities in your staff. But ultimately, a leader needs take these ideas and craft something that guides the organization.
- Hmmmm.... I tend to perform better working for this type of manager
- Yes-- when to step back
- I had a job in retail that the owner boss was so controlling that I was dying a slow death there even though I really Loved my job!
- I think this relates to recognizing the strengths of the team, and that it complements the strengths of the leader
- I had a supervisor who was so passionate and creative, he was unable to make room for any others. After some coaching, he was unable to change this pattern. We agreed he may be better in one-person setting.
- I think both are important....i find some creative and passionate leaders inspire passion and creativity in others, by example
- these are words I work to perform with the idea that I am not only performing them as a manager but also as a role model for others who work for and with me AND then giving them opps to display these as well....do it and pay it forward as a skill set
- Would it be accurate to say that the goal is that a team ultimately ties their individual visions to their roles?

Chat Brainstorm – Assuming great people will continue to be – Ability – Engagement – Aspiration model

- We are constantly faced with applicants who aren't qualified for the position, then frustrated when they don't get the position. I believe this is unrealistic expectations of the employer.
- The employee has unrealistic expectations of the employer.
- some are engaged but lack professional energy (is what I call it)
- Maybe the ideas are good and that is the contribution this person makes to the project.
- how can you be engaged but lack energy? what is the distinction?
- I think it's important to separate ability from training. A true lack of ability seems to be harder to overcome than a lack of training.
- maybe the engagement i think I see (w/o energy) is really a fake engagement...go along but w/o real energy.
- a professional librarian should be a self starter but I see that this can be hard

- We had a teen volunteer who was not at all interested in the job duties; we agreed it wasn't working. However, he turned into our best PR person to get other teens who did love the job.
- I think a lot of people who work in libraries don't have a sense of the entire organization.
- possibly engaged in duties other than those assigned to them?
- A lot of people in first jobs and first professional jobs don't know what they want yet, but they are still fun to mentor
- Younger people in particular can be great workers / stars, but don't think of themselves as people "who work in libraries"
- I agree that it can be hard to have a good sense of the entire org!
- I think of engagement as buy-in. Sometimes it's hard to buy in to the vision when the vision seems false or superficial. It's important that leaders make the vision real, and not just business-speak.
- It depends on the individuals - some come into a job with very different expectations than the realities of the job.
- Sounds like a sidekick - Like Robin to Batman....
- just because someone is an awesome librarian, doesn't mean they would be a good supervisor of librarians
- Peter Principle
- I too have star staff who are uncomfortable with an expectation of "moving up." They are perfectly happy where they are. I'm happy to keep them there.
- Right we need leaders and stars in all jobs!
- Ask staff questions about their aspirations