

## BOOK REVIEW / CRITIQUE DE LIVRE

**Mid-career library and information professionals: a leadership primer.** By Dawn Lowe-Wincentsen and Linda Crook (Eds.). Oxford: Chandos Publishing, 2010. 241 pages (soft cover). ISBN: 978-1-843346098. US\$80.00. Includes bibliographical references and index.

Dawn Lowe-Wincentsen and Linda Crook have compiled contributions from 19 international librarians willing to share tips and resources on leadership, perspectives on advancing to leadership positions, suggestions for developing one's own leadership style, and advice on mapping out a career plan. The editors are both librarians in mid-career with strong leadership credentials. Lowe-Wincentsen is the Portland Operations librarian at the Oregon Institute of Technology, and is the co-author of *A Leadership Primer for New Librarians: Tools for Helping Today's Early Career Librarians Become Tomorrow's Library Leaders* (2009). Linda Crook is Reference Team Leader and Science Librarian at Washington State University, and was a 2008 American Library Association Emerging Leader.

The editors' hope is that regardless of where you are in your career you will "find new ideas to be a leader in your own life, your job, your career and our profession" (p. 5). For example, Crook notes that "the position you hold is only a small indicator of your success in the profession" (p. 2). Later on, Lisa Forrest writes significantly that "effective leadership is possible regardless of the hierarchical position within the workplace" (p. 152), and refers to Kouzes and Posner's five principles of exemplary leadership to expand traditional outreach.

Here is a sampling of what some of the chapters cover: Kenneth Schlesinger says that one size does not fit everyone and that librarianship prepares one very well for management positions. He offers tips for successful management, such as setting a good example. Robin Ewing and Melissa Prescott offer tips for representing your department, working on committees and task forces, reaching consensus and balancing personalities. Kathryn Munson emphasizes the importance of staying organized, taking care of yourself, setting achievable goals, making time to worry, knowing your rights and not procrastinating in the face of all that happens in one's life. Nancy Faget describes the Peter Principle and offers tips for performing

competently to avoid fulfilling it. Ruth Mirtz defines resilience as the "ability to work productively and creatively within multiple roles ... to create the leaders we want, as we create our own best roles in the library" (p. 198). Herman A. Peterson relates how he successfully transitioned from being a library director at a small academic library to Head of Reference and Instruction at a mid-sized public university.

In other memorable chapters, Melissa Aho and Erika Bennett outline James Borg's seven essential persuasion skills: "good listening skills, how to hold attention, appreciation of body language, memory skills, knowledge of the impact of words, skills with a telephone, and negotiation skills" (p. 38).

Mary Jo Orzech explores ways that librarians make their mark by recognizing leadership options along the way. She also provides a list of good leadership skills, such as, "... remembering to look behind and mentor someone else on the way up" (p. 55). Jacob Hill and Sarah Hill offer strategies for self-development outside of your job responsibilities through enunciating your interests, specialties, and opinions; identifying the potential within your field; gathering institutional support; identifying appropriate venues and finding opportunities to collaborate. Finally, Lowe-Wincentsen concludes by providing tips on developing and exercising your leadership potential by suggesting strategies for goal-setting and self-awareness.

One of the book's strengths is that it is written by librarians with a wide breadth of experiences. They provide useful references for further reading, and many of them make effective use of tables to convey key points. The book's format, length and price are reasonable. This book provides new ideas about how to be a leader in one's life, job, career and profession by reaching out to librarians at any stage of their career who also want to be leaders. It is up to readers to absorb its content, adopt the ideas promoted in it, and to make a difference!

**Ana Rosa Blue**

*WorkSafeBC*

6951 Westminster Highway

Richmond, BC, V7C 1C6, Canada

E-mail: [anarosa.blue@worksafebc.com](mailto:anarosa.blue@worksafebc.com)