The No-Nonsense Guide to Leadership, Management and Teamwork



The No-Nonsense Guide to Leadership, Management and Teamwork

Barbara Allan



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Two earlier books of mine, *The No-Nonsense Guide to Project Management* (Facet Publishing, 2017) and *Supervising and Leading Teams in ILS* (Facet Publishing, 2007) informed this one. A few personal case studies are repeated in this book, as I was unable to find alternatives which made the same point. Writing this book has been an interesting learning experience, as there is such a lively debate about leadership in libraries and information services during these challenging times.

Finally, thank you to Denis and Sarah, who have been patient and supportive during my time working on this book.

Barbara Allan

Leadership, management and teamwork today

Introduction

This chapter introduces the book and also different ideas about leadership, management and teamwork, and their applications in library and information services. These ideas are arranged under the following headings: the context of information and library work; working as a manager or leader; being clear about your role, responsibilities and boundaries; characteristics of managers and leaders; management and leadership styles; and leading from the middle. This is followed by an overview of the structure and contents of this book, *The No-Nonsense Guide to Leadership, Management and Teamwork*.

About this book

This book provides a practical guide to leadership, management and teamwork in library and information services. The book covers management and leadership ideas, tools and techniques, and examples and case studies are provided from a wide range of libraries and information services in the UK and across the world.

This book is relevant to aspiring managers who want to move into a management role, as well as newly appointed leaders who are in their first director role. Established leaders who are dealing with new challenges or who want to review their professional practices will find it helpful. In addition, individual librarians who take on an unofficial management or leadership role may find the ideas in this book help to clarify their situation. Professional librarians and information workers who are not managers or leaders may find this book helps them in understanding the pressures and approaches of their own manager or leader.

The No-Nonsense Guide to Leadership, Management and Teamwork was developed from a wide range of sources including:

- library and information studies research literature
- professional literature, including journals, reports and other documents available from professional associations
- online sources such as blogs, online discussions following the publication of articles, and interviews
- informal interviews with colleagues (names and contexts have been changed to maintain anonymity)
- generic business, management and leadership literature
- personal experiences (I have managed and led a range of libraries –
 workplace, further education, university as well as spending three
 years as pro vice-chancellor and dean of a business school in a
 metropolitan university).

The context of information and library work

Dramatic changes and multiple challenges are having an impact in libraries and information services across all sectors. Examples of changes include: changing expectations of library users and stakeholders; new ideas about library spaces and their uses; the redesign and relocation of libraries as cultural centres of communities; the impact of technology, including digitisation, social media and mobile technologies; the development of shared services; changes in scholarly publication methods and the research environment; financial challenges, institutional and government cutbacks; environmental issues; and political uncertainties.

The impact of these changes means that the leadership and management of libraries and information services is particularly challenging. Examples of the issues facing individual leaders and managers include: the need to deliver a high-quality and relevant service at the same time as there is a reduction in budgets and other resources; restructuring of organizations so that the library director is no longer a member of the senior management team; library closures; reduction in staffing with the increase in the use of volunteers; and the demand to become entrepreneurial and generate more income. In this challenging environment, libraries and information services need strong leaders and managers who have developed a range of leadership and management skills, in addition to their own professional knowledge and skills as librarians and information workers.

Working as a manager or leader

The previous section identified some of the current changes and challenges

that are faced in libraries and information services. The implications of working in this turbulent environment are that library leaders and managers need a range of professional skills as well as knowledge and experience of the sector.

There are often debates about the differences between leaders and managers, and it is sometimes difficult to work out from job titles. In this book, the following distinctions are made.

- The leader or director's focus is at both the organizational level and on the library and information service. This means that she must promote the library and information service as well as delivering the organization's strategy. The director will report to the executive leader and be a member of the executive body, report to a member of the executive body, or report to someone who reports to a member of the executive body.
- A senior library and information service manager reports to the library director and will contribute to the development of the library strategy. She will be focused on managing operations or projects within the library, and at the same time working across the organization as appropriate.
- A team manager's or supervisor's focus is likely to be on the work of the team within the library and information service and she is likely to report to a senior library manager.

The roles of leader, manager and team leader overlap in the following areas: managing their teams and the library operations; following organizational policies and practices; reporting to their leader; and communicating with stakeholders. In addition, people in these roles all have a 'duty of care', which means that legally they must follow relevant health and safety laws, as well as the common law duty of care, which includes not causing, or preventing, physical or psychological injury or damage (see Chapter 10).

Finally, the work of a solo librarian, e.g. in school and workplace libraries, is particularly challenging, as she must take on all three roles, including strategic leadership, managing the library service and perhaps leading a team of volunteers, and doing the day-to-day operational work. At the same time, she is working without the benefit of being in a team of professional library and information workers.

Characteristics of effective managers and leaders

The starting point for new professionals developing their knowledge of management is their qualification in library and information studies, which include modules on management and leadership, as well as opportunities for work experience. These programmes provide a grounding which will then be developed as individuals gain experience and expertise, and also take part in a wide range of education and training opportunities (see Chapter 12).

In the workplace, individuals will develop the necessary knowledge, skills and behaviours required for managing and leading a library and information service, which they demonstrate through the recruitment and selection process when applying for promotion. There are many different approaches to identifying and representing the required knowledge, skills and behaviours for library managers and leaders, and they may be categorised at different levels, e.g. basic, advanced, expert. Typically, professional associations will develop and publicise their own specific approaches which demonstrate the overlap between the knowledge, skills and behaviours required of library managers and leaders. One example, published by CILIP – the Library and Information Association, is their Professional Knowledge and Skills Base (PKSB), which does not distinguish between management and leadership, and it is organized under the headings presented in Figure 1.1 opposite.

Chow and Rich (2013), working in the USA, interviewed academic, public, school media and special library managers and leaders in order to identify a core set of traits and characteristics. They identified common characteristics across the different sectors and these included: empathy; vision; communication; flexibility; delegation; creativity; integrity; and passion. Research by Gwyer (2015) resulted in the following list of skills required by experienced managers and library leaders:

- change management
- community building
- multi-professional working
- networking, influencing and negotiation
- creativity and innovation
- proving value to the organization
- supporting research in a digital world
- digital literacy and digital information management

- marketing and marketing communications
- developing and managing space
- collaboration
- cross-sector working
- international working.
- 1 Wider Organization and Environmental context
- 2 Wider Library, Information and Knowledge Sector context
- 3 Professional expertise
- 4 Generic Skills
 - Leadership and Advocacy
 - Leadership skills, Strategic thinking and evaluation, Advocacy, Demonstrating value, Partnership development, Influencing key stakeholders, Working with decision makers
 - Strategy, Planning and Management
 - Strategic planning, Business planning and asset management, Operational planning, Policy, Legal compliance, Financial management, Contract management, People management, Project management, Change management
 - Customer Focus, Service Design and Marketing
 - Strategic marketing, Communicating with stakeholders, Community planning and engagement, Service innovation, development, and design, Customer service skills, Quality management
 - IT and Communication
 - ICT skills, Library, information and knowledge technologies, System design and development of systems, Social media and collaborative tools, Communication skills, Networking skills, Media and PR skills, Language skills. Open source systems
- 5 Ethics and values

Figure 1.1 CILIP Professional Knowledge and Skills Base

Research into leadership tends to focus on the leader, using a variety of definitions and different approaches to characterise their skills and abilities. Martin (2018) researched 'followers' and the traits that 318 academic librarians valued in a leader. Librarians valued the following traits in leaders: emotional intelligence; empowering; visionary thinker; communicator; librarian/manager; trustworthy; and a catalyst for change. Martin also identified six themes that librarians wanted in their future leaders as: people first; visionary; change agent; experienced librarian; role model; and communicator. These desired characteristics in library leaders are most closely associated with the transformational leader described below.

Management and leadership styles

One challenge to thinking about management and leadership is that the current business and management literature tends to be biased towards white, male, Western perspectives. There is research from different perspectives, including those of women and people from different ethnic backgrounds. Relevant books on women and leadership include Tan and Defrank-Cole (2018) and Madsen (2017), and Kumaran (2012) writes about leadership and ethnic minorities.

Research into leadership and management identifies many different leadership styles and this section explores a selection of management and leadership styles, and it concludes with a summary in Table 1.2 below. Kurt Lewin and colleagues (1939) argued that there are three styles of leadership: autocratic; democratic; and laissez-faire. Autocratic leaders make decisions without consulting others, which can be demoralising and lead to poor decisions. In certain circumstances, such as an emergency, this style is appropriate. Democratic leaders make the final decisions and they involve others in their decision-making process. This approach encourages creativity and team members may become very engaged in the decision-making process. However, if the final decision does not acknowledge their input and ideas then it can be discouraging. Laissez-faire 'leaders' do not actually lead but allow their team members freedom to decide their own working practices. Laissez-faire 'leaders' avoid their responsibilities as a leader.

The concept of transformational leadership developed in the 1970s and 1980s, and these leaders motivate others through their energy, enthusiasm and vision. Martin researched transformational leadership in the context of academic libraries and writes:

In order to adjust to the 'new normal' of constant change, libraries need a new kind of leadership. Leaders need to be visionary, strongly grounded in morals, ethics, and principles, comfortable with and able to lead change, and people-centred. All of these traits are found in transformational leaders.

(Martin, 2016, 271)

Transformational leadership is often contrasted with transactional leadership, which, as its name suggests, is based on the idea that both parties carry out a transaction based on an implicit or explicit contract. These two approaches to leadership are compared in Table 1.1 opposite (adapted from Hay, 2012).

Transactional leadership	Transformational leadership
Leader is responsive.	Leader is pro-active.
The leader works within the current organizational culture.	The leader works to change the organization's culture so that it meets the needs of the new environment.
Employees achieve their goals through 'regards and punishments' set by their manager or leader, e.g. through a performance management or appraisal system.	Colleagues achieve their objectives in order to achieve the vision of their leader as well as the associated values and beliefs.
The leader motivates others by appealing to their own self-interest.	The leader motivates others by appealing to the vision or group interests first.
The leader maintains the status quo and stresses following the correct policies and procedures.	The leader works with individuals and teams, and promotes innovation and creativity.

Table 1.1 Comparison of transactional and transformational leadership

Crowe (2003) identifies the value of collaborative leadership for academic reference librarians leading groups of professionals and suggests that this model of leadership provides better job satisfaction for librarians and improved services to library users. Archer and Cameron (2008) note that the leaders of these organizations 'have to learn to share control, and to trust a partner to deliver, even though the partner may operate very differently from themselves'. Librarians and information workers have a history of working collaboratively and the concept of collaborative leadership is in alignment with the profession and working in partnership (see Chapter 5).

More recently, the concept of 'adaptive leadership' was developed by Heifetz, Grashow and Linsky (2009) as a response to helping leaders and organizations deal with complex change and uncertainty. Adaptive leadership involves taking a holistic approach to a situation and using an open-minded, enquiring and learning approach to facilitate their team in exploring the problem, its context and the broader environment, and then developing a solution. Curtis (2017) describes the importance of adaptive leadership for school librarians and Wong and Chan (2018) present research on adaptive leadership in academic libraries in Hong Kong.

Another response to the challenges, particularly financial ones, in today's demanding environment is the rise of the concept of 'entrepreneurial

leadership' and this is associated with a slightly different set of leadership skills. Eggers and Leahy (1995) identified the top five leadership skills critical for entrepreneurial leaders as: financial management, communication, motivation of others, vision and self-motivation. Jusic, writing on entrepreneurial leadership in public libraries, concludes:

There is agreement that library directors need a more entrepreneurial mindset and that there needs to be more discussion of what it means to be an entrepreneurial leader. In the future, there will be a need for more entrepreneurial leaders that are forward thinking and that are constantly looking for ways to improve the library if libraries are to remain relevant and survive in this climate of constant change and uncertainty.

(Jusic, 2013)

The idea that a leader must incorporate ethical behaviour into her leadership style has become accepted and ethical leadership is defined as 'the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision making' (Brown, Trevino and Harrison, 2005, 120). This ethical behaviour may underpin any leadership style and it is considered in more detail in Chapter 4.

Finally, the concept of situational leadership suggests that there is no single 'best' style of leadership (Hersey, 1985). Effective leadership is situational and depends on the task and the context, and this means that successful leaders vary their style to meet the needs of a particular situation. Consequently, leaders need to be open-minded, flexible and adaptable with a repertoire of leadership styles.

The value of this research into leadership styles for directors and managers in library and information services is that they provide a framework for reflection. Individual leaders and managers are likely to develop a range of styles depending on their context, experience and expertise. Table 1.2 on the following pages provides a summary of different leadership styles and their impact.

 Table 1.2 Different leadership styles

Style	Decision making	Impact on team	Typical quotations
Adaptive	Leader behaves as facilitator and takes a holistic approach to decision making.	Team members are encouraged to be creative and to think beyond standard ideas and approaches.	'What do we need to learn'
Authoritarian	The leader makes the decision and expects everyone to obey it without question.	There is one-way communication from the leader to the team. There is no discussion.	'Do what I say'
Authoritative	Leader makes the decision. The decisions may be questioned and discussed.	Everyone knows what is expected of them and which policies and procedures to follow.	'Do what I suggest'
Chaotic	There is no consistent style of leadership. The leader may shift between different styles, e.g. individualistic and authoritarian.	Uncertainty, confusion, anxiety, stress.	A mixture of all of the quotations.
Collaborative	Decision making follows collaborative discussions with stakeholders.	Team members are part of the decision-making process.	'How can we move forward?' 'What do you think?'
Entrepreneurial	Leader looks for new opportunities and balances risks.	Team members are encouraged to be creative and to identify new opportunities.	'How can we get involved?'
Ethical	Leader considers the ethical aspects of every decision.	The leader role models ethical behaviour and encourages everyone to consider potential ethical issues.	'Is this ethical?'

(Continued)

 Table 1.2 Continued

Style	Decision making	Impact on team	Typical quotations
Individualistic	The leader goes beyond his/her authority and may want to usurp or deny another person's legitimate authority.	This style is characterised by feuds and crises. The team may be confused and uncertain. There is a sense of changing goalposts and wasted work.	'No one is making this decision so I will make it'
Laissez-faire	The leader doesn't make decisions but allows matters to evolve.	There is confusion and uncertainty in the team. Individuals may attempt to take over the role of the leader.	'If I ignore it then it will go away'
Participative	Decisions follow a period of consultation.	All team members have participated in the decision-making process and understand the rationale for the final decision. Much time is spent on the decision-making process and the final decision is psychologically owned by the team.	'Let us decide together'
Situational	The leader decides which leadership style and associated decision-making process is most suited to the situation.	The team members will follow their leader if they understand the reasons for a particular style of leadership in a given situation. There is the potential that team members will be confused by what may appear to be an inconsistent style of leadership.	'In this situation, we need to'

(Continued)

Style	Decision making	Impact on team	Typical quotations
Transactional	The leader makes the decisions and team members are rewarded for supporting them.	The team members follow the leader and his/her decisions, policies or procedures, as this will lead to some kind of personal benefit.	'If you do this then you will benefit by'
Transformational or visionary	Leader presents the vision and 'big picture' and team members will be motivated to follow it.	Team members are likely to be motivated to follow the vision and will be able to work out much of the detail for themselves.	'Our vision is'

Table 1.2 Continued

Case study 1.1 Leadership styles

In an informal interview, Michelle described her leadership style as follows:

'I am the director of a large merged library, learning and technologies centre in a Northern university in the UK. My leadership style has changed over the years. When I managed customer services in another academic library, I think my style was a blend of authoritative and collaborative - it depended on the issue and the team. Over time and with experience, I have become more focused on collaborative and transformational leadership – my job here has been to renew the service so that it is student-centred and research-centred as well as lean. I couldn't have done that without working collaboratively and also having a clear vision. Although I always consult staff (some people would say too much), I know that I have to stand by our final decisions - if things went terribly wrong then my job could become very insecure. The library senior team is great and we work collaboratively. I am very aware of ethical issues and I don't think you can be an excellent leader or role model unless you are ethical at all times. Overall, I try to take a balanced approach and work with my staff – who are all experts and have really good insights. But, if there was a fire then I would become 100% authoritarian.'

Leading from the middle

Many library and information service leaders are located somewhere in the middle of the organization and they report to their manager, who may be a director (or equivalent) and work at an executive level on the board (or equivalent senior decision-making body), or their manager reports to a director. This is often the case in school and special libraries and information services, where solo librarians, who do not have a team to lead or manage, carry out many of the functions of the director of a large library.

In these situations, the library leader must achieve their strategic ends by working with at least one layer (and often many layers) of management and influencing the ideas and decisions of someone who is unlikely to have specialist knowledge of the library and information work. This can be very challenging, as the solo librarian may not have access to policy documents and organizational information but will need to demonstrate the value of the library and align it with the organization's goals and objectives (Murray, 2018).

Many solo librarians lead from the middle and this means that they have to develop knowledge and skills associated with being a director of a large library and then use their communication and networking skills to influence the decision makers in their organization.

Structure of this book

This chapter provides an introduction to the book as well as introducing general ideas about leadership and management. The challenging context of information and library work is outlined and this is followed by a section that considers the roles of a library leader, manager or team leader. This is followed by an outline of the research on the characteristics of effective managers and leaders. Leadership styles are explored and their key characteristics are summarised. Finally, the situation of librarians who are leading from the middle is considered with respect to some of their challenges.

Chapter 2 considers the transition process a newly appointed library manager or leader experiences as she moves into her new role. The importance of establishing a support network and also carrying out research on your new organization is outlined. This is followed by sections which focus on getting to know your leader and senior team, as well as the stakeholders. Advice is given on analysing your environment and understanding the culture and politics of the organization. Other aspects of starting a new role are considered, including making a 'to do' list, estab-

lishing your position and initial decision making. Finally, the chapter explores looking after yourself and others, and also managing work/life balance.

Strategic leadership is the focus of Chapter 3, which starts with advice on getting to know your leader and the senior team, and on working in the senior team. This is vital for all library leaders and managers, as developing constructive working relationships is essential if you are to influence the decision-making process in the organization. The following sections consider: working with stakeholders; strategic planning; and strategic marketing. The final section outlines strategic thinking and planning for solo librarians. Chapter 4 focuses on generic management and leadership practices that underpin being a confident manager and leader. These include: building consensus; creative thinking; decision making; diversity and inclusion; ethical decision making; problem solving; negotiating; and conflict management.

How to lead and manage your team is explored in Chapter 5 and this considers the communications side of teamwork: before you meet the team; establishing effective working practices; and team development. This is followed by sections on particular types of teamwork, including working in partnership; working with virtual teams; and working with volunteers, including crowdsourcing. The chapter ends with a short section on succession planning.

Chapter 6 is concerned with managing the work and starts by looking at documenting the operations. Different types of work are identified and then there is a focus on managing process work, including process mapping. Managers who are working with large teams are likely to be using ICT to manage teamwork and this is considered with a series of practical case studies. The second part of this chapter focuses on managing people and this covers topics such as: setting objectives; delegating tasks; giving instructions; giving feedback; and managing performance. The final part of this chapter is concerned with planning for incidents and emergencies, which includes: risk analysis and mitigation; being prepared; and emergency response and recovery.

Project management is the focus of Chapter 7, which begins with an introduction to different types of projects as well as project management tools and techniques. The project cycle is introduced and there is a summary of each stage: starting the project; detailed planning; implementation; and evaluation and dissemination. This is followed by specific

project methodologies using the examples of PRINCE2® and Agile. Finally, there is a section on using ICT to support projects. Strategic projects also involve the management of change, which is explored in Chapter 8. This chapter begins by introducing change and change processes and the importance of transformative leadership. The people side of change is vital and this includes managing stakeholders as well as supporting people through change.

The heart of many leadership and management activities is communications and Chapter 9 provides a focus on common communication techniques. This chapter starts by identifying the importance of the audience and the purpose of the communication activity. This is followed by an alphabetical list of topics relevant to senior leaders and managers and including: briefings; e-bulletins; e-mail; infographics; meetings; networking; personal presentation; presentations; report writing; and social media.

Chapter 10 takes a human resource management perspective to cover a range of topics, including: recruitment and selection; induction; performance management and appraisal; training and development; disciplinary policy and procedures; grievance policy and procedures; health and safety at work; managing absenteeism; managing diversity; health and well-being; and work/life balance.

Managing money is a basic skill for library leaders and managers and this is introduced in Chapter 11, which starts by highlighting the importance of demonstrating value for money, using a number of practical examples. This is followed by a section on managing a budget. As library and information service budgets are under increasing pressure, it is becoming more important to generate income from a range of sources and this is covered in sections on bidding and tendering for projects, and other sources of income, including crowdfunding.

The final chapter is concerned with lifelong professional development and this starts by considering sources of management and leadership education and development. This includes management and leadership programmes developed for the library and information sector, and opportunities offered by professional organizations, as well as short courses, conferences and workshops. The second part of the chapter is concerned with a series of topics that outline learning and development opportunities and these include: action learning; coaching; learning in the workplace; mentoring; personal development portfolios; reflection; and volunteering.

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