# The Evolution of the Roles of Staff and Team Development in a Changing Organization: The University of Arizona Library Experience

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## FIRST TWO YEARS: 1992–94—LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR THE RESTRUCTURED ORGANIZATION: TRAINING PLANS

In 1992, the University of Arizona Library undertook a major organizational self-study. The reasons for doing this were simple and straightforward: shrinking funds from both the University and the State, rising costs for materials (especially serials), and a rapidly changing technological and vendor environment. The writing was on the wall—it was time to stop and reassess how we went about our business. The results of this study prompted us to conclude that we needed to change how we were organized to accomplish our work so that we could continue to provide access to materials, moving from an ownership model of delivery, while at the same time improving and increasing services for our customers.

Our solution to this challenge lay in making a bold and daring decision: to restructure completely the Library from a traditional hierarchy to a team-based structure that held the customer as the central focus. As this new structure was designed, many challenges arose, one of the toughest being staff training and team development. What follows is an overview of what we at the University of Arizona have learned from three years of experience in attempting, through training and development, to change our work processes and organizational culture.

Before embarking on a description of the kinds of training and programming that we undertook, a brief snapshot of the entire restructuring process is in order. It started in 1992 with a steering committee that was charged by the Library's Administrative Group (The Dean of the Library and three Assistant University Librarians) to study various organizational models and to offer three alternative models for staff perusal. The Steering Committee was assisted by Susan Jurow of the ARL Office of Management Services. Staff feedback was critical to which model was chosen. Once the model was chosen, Design Teams were put into place. The charge of these teams was to design workflow that was customer focused.

When this phase was completed, the Operational Adjustment team was formed. This group represented members of the original Steering Committee and the Design teams. Their task was to take the workflow of the four Design teams and to identify and describe the functional teams and determine how they would work together. This team created the new organizational chart. It was at this point in the process that the Dean of Libraries first became involved in the design of the new organization.

Finally, "Implementation Teams" were formed to further refine the work of the design teams. This work included identifying key work activities within each team and making full time personnel allocation recommendations. After all this was accomplished, several other major tasks needed to be taken care of, including interviewing and hiring team leaders and reassigning staff to teams.

During this year and a half process, the library needed to identify its new values and philosophical framework. What kind of organization did we want? What did we aspire to be? What was our mission? How did we want to organize our work? Based on our study of trends in the business world and an environmental scan, we determined that a team-based organization would allow us to focus on customer needs. We also wanted to foster and promote diver-

sity in staffing as well as in our collections and services, and we wanted to empower people to openly communicate and make decisions more appropriate to their level of responsibility to customers. In addition, we chose to adopt total quality management techniques to improve work processes and increase accountability to serve customers. We aspired to become a learning organization to ready ourselves for unknown future challenges.

While all this was fine and dandy in theory, how to get from "a" to "b" and all the way to "z" was another matter. What kinds of teams did we want? What was the role of team leaders? Of team members? What new skills were required? What was the role of support/administrative positions? And finally, how the heck were we going to train people to develop these new skills and learn these new concepts?

## OUR APPROACH TO TRAINING IN THE FIRST TWO YEARS:

There were very few libraries that had undertaken the kind of restructuring to a team-based environment that we had chosen, so we had no library models to follow. Instead, we relied heavily on advice and guidance from a number of consultants.

These included the Association of Research Libraries Office of Management Services staff, the University of Arizona Continuous Organizational Renewal Office (CORe), the INTEL Corporation, and trainers from the University's Employee Development and Training and Employee Wellness departments. The Library's Staff Development librarian (whose title was later changed to the Assistant to the Dean for Staff Development, Recruitment and Diversity), and the Assistant University Librarian for Branch Services (who later became the Assistant Dean for Team Facilitation) worked with these consultants and trainers to identify areas of need and to coordinate and implement training plans for the transition. The Library's Staff Development Committee, a cross section of Library staff composed of librarians and career staff, also helped coordinate numerous in-house programs.

The need for training was the constant theme in all our discussions with consultants. Therefore much of the staff's time in the first two years in the new structure was spent in training. Topics covered dealt with three major themes—dealing with change, team leader development, and team development. What

follows are more in-depth descriptions of some of the sessions held and what we learned from them.

## DEALING WITH CHANGE:

Because we knew that we would be undertaking major changes throughout the organization, some of the first training sessions held were on coping with organizational change—what to expect and how to take care of oneself in a time of uncertainty. While it was a noble effort, this and subsequent sessions on dealing with change yielded mixed reactions. When the first session was conducted, for example, nobody knew what kinds of changes were going to take place or what kind of impact these changes would have on individuals. This left staff feeling vulnerable and afraid, the opposite of what we wanted to accomplish.

Yet we continued our efforts, addressing the issue of uncertainty and fear by involving as many staff in the actual design and implementation processes as possible and by sponsoring more sessions and resources for the staff at different points in the process. One such session all staff were invited to attend covered organizational values and the issue of trust. Much brainstorming was done, but since not all staff participated and because consensus on these values was not reached, a shared understanding did not occur at this point, even if it was clearly apparent that there did indeed exist shared values within the organization. Other sessions held that dealt directly with change included stress management, time management, conflict resolution training and goal setting training.

Major changes in positions occurred during the staff reassignment process. As a precursor to this, several training sessions were held on the topic of negotiation. Our intent was to provide staff with some basic negotiation skills that they could use during the reassignment process, as there was flexibility built in so that staff could apply for and prioritize which positions they wanted.

Because we wanted the reassignment process to be fair and equitable, 6 staff members (elected by their colleagues and the library's leadership group) served as "ombudspeople" after they received training in effective listening and problem solving. Ombudspeople provided neutral mediation for staff who felt they were not being heard or given a fair shake in the reassignment process.

Since we wanted to increase the numbers of diverse staff on board in addition to raising awareness of diversity issues across the organization, we also provided numerous opportunities for the staff to learn about other cultures and traditions. Many of these events were celebratory occasions that included the sharing of food, music and a presentation by a guest lecturer. A number of technology-related workshops and other events were held for the staff during this time period. Several sessions were held on e-mail and its use, for example, as were two videoconferences on new technologies.

In retrospect, our expectations were high. We thought we could easily manage to implement successfully a change in the structure of the organization and create a new culture while also undergoing budget cuts, cuts in serials, and the implementation of a new integrated library system. We challenged ourselves and the staff to capacity (and in some cases beyond capacity) to absorb and turn the training they received into learning by practice. This resulted in some resistance to the restructuring. It also, in some cases, resulted in a negative reaction to participation in training.

We have learned that training alone does not insure a successful change process. An understanding of the reasons for and a willingness to accept and embrace change have to be continual as does the practice of new skills and behaviors. Training is a starting point, but that's about it. There has to be follow through, reflection, feedback and practice over a long period of time for real change to take root.

Finally, we have found that venturing into new territory is challenging and can be lonely. Because we had no other library models to go by, we learned by doing. In retrospect, we have learned that when undergoing change it is important to work with people where they are in their own development and to be convincing, clear, and positive about the need for change and the vision of the future. We are in the process of practicing the team-based model, and are fine tuning it as we learn what does and what does not work.

## TEAM DEVELOPMENT:

In order to follow the team model which the study committees had chosen, our consultant from ARL/OMS, Maureen Sullivan, introduced the concept of teams and team development to staff members (roughly one third of the entire staff) involved in the design and implementation phases of the restructuring process. Included in these sessions were an overview of teams—what they were and how they differed from committees—and an introduction to the stages of team development. To assist these teams in their work, the consultants also offered training in workflow charting and encouraged the teams to gather data to drive their decision making. In addition, several assessment instruments such as the Personal Style Inventory and the Parker Team Player Survey were used to help the staff assess their own preferred work styles and to assess how their fledgling teams were operating.

Once teams had been put into place, our OMS consultant recommended that the entire library staff take the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory (MBTI) so that each team could identify differences and commonalities among team members during team building, thus fostering a shared understanding of individuals' preferred modes of communication and work styles. The MBTI became the foundation for future teambuilding sessions aimed at members increasing mutual understanding and valuing of differences.

At approximately the same time that the Library began the restructuring process, the University of Arizona implemented a program called Continuous Organizational Renewal (referred to simply as CORe), the purpose of which was to provide training and resources for campus units undergoing change to a total quality management model. CORe partnered with the INTEL Corporation, which in turn provided a full time consultant and some of the training modules used in the CORe curriculum. These included courses on effective meetings, facilitation skills, management by planning, and basic quality tools.

Because we planned to move toward implementing total quality principles and process improvement, we were invited to participate in some of this training. We chose at first to send staff to the sessions on effective meetings, since the CORe program was more comprehensive than some of the training we had previously offered on the same topic. We "strongly encouraged" all staff to attend these sessions because we felt that everyone in the organization needed to develop a common understanding of basic techniques for running meetings. (These tech-

niques included agenda setting, tracking group memory, developing action/decision charts, and assigning responsibility for follow-up as well as an overview of the scope and contents of different kinds of meetings, such as mission meetings and process meetings).

While the material covered was viewed by most of the staff as very useful, there was some resistance to the notion that staff were "strongly encouraged" to attend these sessions. Practice of these techniques was not uniformly implemented in team meetings. In addition to having access to consultants, funding was available for staff attendance at conferences and workshops that helped us learn more about total quality management, teams in organizations, needs assessment and other related issues. We also invited a number of outside "experts"—librarians from other institutions—to talk about some of these issues. In sum, we spent approximately $30,000 on these efforts.

As we engaged in this work, we learned that library leadership's (including ours) participation was vital to the success of the restructuring process. We learned that we need to be anticipators, assessors, organizers, matchers of need to trainers, identifiers of training opportunities, counselors and coaches. Little did we know, however, that over time our own roles would evolve and change along with the rest of the organization.

Looking back, we were very successful in attaining basic conceptual understandings and some follow-up practice of the skills and values we had identified as being key to our success. While we could have chosen a method other than the top down model to attain this success, we believe this approach was necessary because leadership, commitment to change and perseverance were critical elements in this phase. The top down approach allowed us to move forward quickly and allowed us to contribute to the provision of these necessary ingredients.

## TEAM LEADER TRAINING:

The reorganization reduced 17 departments to 11 teams. The evolution into teams meant we no longer had positions available for our excellent department managers, rather we needed the positions of coaches and mentors. All team leader positions became open and any qualified staff could apply. Once team leaders were hired, several training sessions were pro-

vided by the UA Employee Development and Training Department that included an overview of team development and dynamics as well as an exploration of what the roles of leaders in a team-based environment should be.

Participants also worked together to brainstorm first steps in the team formation process, addressed barriers to effective communication and explored various models of decision making and effective meeting planning. While these first sessions were a helpful start, there clearly was lots more to learn and much more to do in subsequent months, including bringing line supervisors, (later referred to as "work team leaders") into the leadership group and working together to learn these new skills and behaviors.

Diversity training was offered at least twice to the Dean's Cabinet, (comprised of team leaders, the Dean, the Assistant Dean for Team facilitation, the Assistant to the Dean for Staff Development, Recruitment and Diversity, and representatives from the Library Faculty Assembly and the Staff Governance Association). The intent was to help the library leadership gain a better understanding of diversity issues and to gain commitment to promoting diversity within the Library's teams. The sessions focused mostly on individual perceptions of differences, as well as how culture influences one's world view. Little time was given to actual exploration of real life case scenarios in which diversity was the issue. This missing ingredient contributed to these sessions being only marginally successful.

In retrospect, we assumed that team leaders had, through the training they were provided, a strong enough foundation quickly and easily to tackle the process of developing their teams. We were naive about how much time it takes to learn coaching skills, new ways of running meetings, and new ways of communicating with people at a time when everyone is involved in a change process. Early on, we were forewarned by our INTEL consultant that the kind of change we were embarking upon would take up to ten years. We quickly realized that this was indeed the case.

## SUMMARY:

Even though the above modules did give a foundation upon which to move forward, the real team work of forming, storming, norming, and performing lay ahead. Especially difficult in the early stages

of team development were issues of communication, including conflict resolution and decision making. Sharing and building upon a common understanding of terminology also became critical to teams' success. In some cases, terms like "empowerment", "consensus", and "dialogue" became buzzwords that easily lost their impact and true meaning. Teams had to grapple with these concepts and define them so that all team members understood what they meant within a team context.

Overall, the first two years of the restructuring were ones of experimentation, excitement, and major change for the staff of the University of Arizona Library. In our roles as catalysts for change, we did our best to provide staff with a basic understanding of what they needed to know and do to make the transition successfully to a team-based organization. While there were probably many things we could have done differently, in hindsight, we accomplished a great deal and succeeded in laying a foundation upon which to learn and grow as we continued building the new organization.

### 3RD YEAR: 1994/95—DEVELOPING STRATEGIC ANNUAL PLANS TO CREATE AN EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION: FOUNDATION BUILDING, TRAINING AND STAFF/TEAM DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

As previously noted, the Intel Corporation shared a number of their training modules with CORe, and in turn, with the Library. One of these—Management By Planning—a strategic planning method developed in Japan and adopted by Intel, became the model we used to develop our annual plan for the 1994/95 year. Briefly, management by planning is a tiered system designed to frame annual planning to move forward towards key long range strategic directions. Included in this tiered framework are the formation of strategic objectives, strategies, tactics, and projects. Teams are structured to build upon each other's work from the top (the strategic objective level) down (the project level). Emphasis throughout is placed on using data to analyze the current environment and track future trends.

### THE PROCESS:

As we began fiscal year 1994/95, the Strategic Long Range Planning Team (SLRP), consisting of 3 librar-

ians, 3 support staff, 1 team leader and 2 student customers, learned and began use of the "management by planning" model. Based upon careful analysis of available data and trends, SLRP decided that one of our priority 5 year strategic objectives would be:

> To create a Library environment and culture that supports the research and education needs of a diverse, ever-changing University community.

SLRP appointed another team, consisting of a cross section of professionals and career staff (called the Strategic Objective 4 team) to guide this strategic objective to completion and success.

This team then chose the strategy :

> To build an effective organization where the library faculty and staff are committed to excellent service, diversity, empowerment, shared responsibility, mutual respect, trust, and continuous learning.

From there they in turn appointed another team, referred to as the Stratactic 4.1 team (consisting of the Assistant to the Dean for Staff Development, Recruitment and Diversity, the Assistant Dean for Team Facilitation, one librarian, and two career staff members), to develop tactics and projects that would move us forward in reaching this strategy. The Stratactic 4.1 team then embarked on an exercise called the matrix evaluation process to select those "critical few" Tactics that would be developed into year-long projects. The tactics chosen were:

Tactic 1: Develop Appreciation for Diversity as a Strength

Tactic 2: Structure and Initiate Effective Communication Mechanisms

Tactic 3: Develop Clear Understanding of Mission and Define Day-to-Day Work Processes in Relation to Mission

Tactic 4: Train for Skills and Abilities Needed for Priority Work

Tactic 5: Align Reward and Recognition Systems with Contribution to Teamwork and Goal Achievement

The Stratactic 4.1 team continued to use the tiered Management by Planning model, and created 18 projects to complete the Tactics. Each project was

appointed an owner (similar to a committee chair-person) who in turn was asked to take individual responsibility or work with a team to complete the projects. The Stratactic 4.1 team then became the Management Review Team for each of the project owners and teams.

## THE TACTICS AND THEIR PROJECTS:

Listed below are Tactics identified by the Management Review Team and the projects that were developed to complete the Tactics.

### Tactic 1: Develop Appreciation for Diversity as a Strength

The University of Arizona Library values diversity and understands the difficulty in developing support for our diverse staff—to be appreciated, treated fairly and equally, and encouraged to participate fully in the shared leadership of the organization.

### Project: Diversity Awareness Training

Two projects were designed to strengthen our appreciation of diversity. A national diversity training group, the Equity Institute, was hired to conduct 2 two-day training sessions that focused on broadening our understanding of what it feels like to be a minority in our society and in the workplace, and on how members of the dominant culture could become allies for people of color and others outside the mainstream in battling various forms of oppression. These sessions were evaluated positively, unlike those designed and facilitated by campus trainers for the Dean's Cabinet.

Our Library Diversity Council also continued its programming and training efforts, sponsoring several informal sessions focused on introducing staff to each other's cultural and ethnic traditions. Some of our most memorable events included: a lecture, open to the entire campus, on Yaqui Easter traditions; a roundtable entitled, "Not So Straight, A Dialogue with Your Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Colleagues"; and a Juneteenth celebration in which a local dance troupe performed and presented information on traditional African dance. In all, 41% of the staff attended a formal diversity training session, with many more attending the more informal programs.

### Project: Cross-Cultural Communication

Twenty-five percent of the staff attended training sessions in cross-cultural communication. The sessions were designed specifically to enable our public services staff to serve our diverse clienteles better. The first workshop yielded mixed evaluations. However, the trainers used the data gathered from these to revise the program, leading to more positive evaluations in subsequent sessions. This particular training program was later integrated as a standard offering in our information and reference service training programs.

Our goal to have 80% of our public services staff (75% of our total staff) participate in this training was too ambitious. Staff readiness to commit time to this competed with other priorities. In addition to having to deal with the challenges associated with the change process, everyone was busy learning new jobs and how to work in teams. First time public service desk employees felt especially stretched with having to learn an array of new skills and behaviors.

### Tactic 2: Structure and Initiate Effective Communication Mechanisms

Three projects were planned to help us deal with the lack of a hierarchical communication structure. However, one project was abandoned, because one of the project teams did not recommend formal training, as we expected they would. Therefore, the two projects listed below describe our strategies to increase our skills in openly, honestly talking and listening to one another in our teams and across the organization.

### Project: Organizational Communication

The first project in this area was to study present modes of communication and to recommend improvements and changes. Although the project team did not complete its work until late in the Fall of 1995, their work resulted in a number of changes. As the project unfolded, this team realized that analyzing organizational problems by survey can be very complex. They discovered that because there exist a wide array of individual styles, needs, and goals for communication, preferences for communication mechanisms are varied and contradictory, rendering any one system incomplete. The rapid development of electronic communication without much protocol or evaluation (here or in the literature) didn't help

matters any. It contributed to our difficulty in determining which changes would yield positive results.

By recognizing the difficulties associated with lateral communication, we were able to bring attention to a number of problems that had been created when the hierarchy was dismantled. In January, we began a new structure for Team Reports (abandoning a required report format that included Highlights, Lowlights, Issues and Plans in favor of leaving the format up to teams) and designed them as Team Reports to the Library rather than to the Dean's Cabinet. The Dean's Cabinet was also renamed the Library Cabinet to reflect its reporting relationship to the whole Library, not JUST the Dean. Cabinet members have also been challenged to play a greater role in team to team communication.

Teams have been empowered to choose what they think are the most appropriate ways to communicate their progress and problems. At the same time, however, they have been asked to be open to constructive feedback. The new Team Reports process and formats will be evaluated by the Library Cabinet during 1996.

E-mail etiquette was reinforced by a list of do's and don'ts that this team asked be developed, and the paper copy of the Library Newsletter was eliminated as this team discovered that staff reported being on "information overload."

The team recommended that the Dean continue her monthly report to the staff that outlined her activities and efforts on behalf of the Library. This helped staff stay informed of campus developments, national developments, and the Dean's interactions with faculty and administrators.

### Project: Interpersonal Communication Training

Another project laid the foundation for understanding the complexities involved in interpersonal communication. We offered Interpersonal Communication and/or Conflict Management training to those permanent functional teams who identified this as an issue in their team assessment. One hundred thirty-five individuals, or 68% of the staff, participated in sessions offered to the teams by local expert trainers.

Through this training, teams and individuals have been exposed to interpersonal communication differences, problems, and barriers. Some of these barriers include how we filter communication, how we ascribe roles, how we speak from positions rather

than explore interests, and how we have mastered debate rather than dialogue as a way of exploring ideas that can lead us to good decision-making. Many of our staff now appreciate the complexity of valuing supportive, open, honest communication.

### Tactic 3: Develop Clear Understanding of Mission and Define Day-to-Day Work Processes in Relation to Mission

Five projects were created to support this strategy, which in turn was designed to realign the work of individuals with team priorities.

It was clear that in the previous organizational structure, the culture of the workplace was such that jobs and individual work assignments had become ends in themselves. As we implemented the new structure, we set out to realign the work of the teams so that our customers' needs determined what kinds of work would take priority. Job descriptions would be written with this goal in mind.

### Project: Quality Dialogues

An overview of total quality management tools designed to increase staff awareness of Quality concepts and what it means to be a Quality organization was designed. An outside Quality consultant, (who we also contracted to work with our Process Improvement Teams), led dialogue sessions that focused on Deming's Four Quality Principles and related management concepts. These included a brief history of Total Quality Management, an overview of economic threats to the Library, and a look at the importance of understanding customers, innovation and success. Small groups then discussed these principles and how they applied to the Library. Transcripts of the dialogue portion of each session were distributed to all participants.

Fifty percent of the staff attended one of these sessions, which yielded overwhelmingly positive evaluations. The "dialogue" approach was especially appealing to staff. We felt this was due to small group discussions that supported inclusiveness and allowed participants to engage in creative thinking when addressing the application of quality ideas.

The sessions also served to connect what the Library was doing with what was happening in the outside world, particularly in business and industry. This helped to dispel some perceptions that we were just doing restructuring to do it, or to be new.

### Project: Mission, Vision, Aspiration Statements

The second project under Tactic 3 included several components: to develop new vision, aspiration and mission statements for the Library and to have the mission statement widely disseminated so that staff would understand it and strive to align their daily work to it. (A hoped for by-product was that staff would eliminate work that did not meet the mission). Unfortunately, the project stalled because it was assigned to the Strategic Long Range Planning Team (SLRP), who had more than enough tasks and deadlines to deal with already. Even so, by the end of the year, SLRP did manage to come up with four draft statements that reflected library-wide input. Involvement of the staff was a successful part of this incomplete project. However, SLRP ran out of time and as a result was not able to make a decision about which statement to adopt.

Further exacerbating these problems was our one attempt at "lightheartedness"; it failed miserably. Specifically, we stated that the final outcome related to the goal of widely disseminating the mission statement would be that "100% of the staff could recite the mission on demand." We had good intentions—to keep the mission statement succinct and to make it widely available. However, our humor was not appreciated. Some individuals thought we were brainwashing, lobotomizing, and otherwise forcing staff to fit a new, unwanted mold. We felt that this perhaps was a sign that staff were stressed out from having to learn so much and make so many changes. We learned from this. Humor under such circumstances is very difficult to practice without offending or fostering negative reactions.

### Project: Team Objectives

This project involved the design and development of a methodology for developing customer focused team objectives. Teams leaders were provided training materials and offered facilitation support to help their teams clarify their team mission, identify customers, outputs, inputs and processes, and develop priorities.

Even though it took longer than planned (six months), every team did develop a set of objectives for the year. To foster team accountability, progress reports on these objectives were to be included in each team's monthly report to the Dean's Cabinet. However, quantifying objectives, learning how to develop timelines and Gantt charts, and staying customer/product focused—all elements of our newly adopted cultural expectations—proved to be a surprisingly difficult challenge for the teams. At times this meant that some teams did not report any progress at all. Staff had difficulty letting go of old habits. They were accustomed to doing work without prioritizing it, and had no previous experience in improving processes and making changes based on customer feedback. Nor were they accustomed to being held accountable in a data-based way for what work had been accomplished throughout the year. Furthermore, there existed little data to describe what priorities teams should focus on. Consequently, many objectives were staff-focused—on training, learning, and developing the new techniques needed to become customer focused.

### Project: Position Descriptions

The purpose of this project was twofold: to revamp both the generic portion (that part that outlines the qualities and expectations that apply to all employees) and the more specific portions of our job descriptions, so that they would reflect the new organizational expectations and mission of the Library. The first piece was developed by the three person team that owned this project, and the second developed by individual staff and team leaders (see appendix for generic portion). The campus Human Resources Department was kept informed on a regular basis of the progress made and approved all changes.

### Tactic 4: Train for Skills and Abilities Needed for Priority Work

In order to achieve this very ambitious tactic, we created six projects, too many to achieve in a year's time. In hindsight, we should have identified first steps in some of these areas and settled for that, but in our efforts to move forward in turning the direction of the staff toward priority work, customer service and quality training, we bit off more than we could chew. We made some progress, but we still have a long way to go.

### Project: Assessing Customer Satisfaction

Our first project was to develop a methodology for assessing customer satisfaction and to have every team conduct an assessment with their primary customer group. This latter piece proved unfeasible. The four member project team did accomplish a great

deal, however. They learned about customer satisfaction surveying, how to do it and what not to do, and they created a "generic" survey for teams to adapt.

Five teams (three cross-functional and two regular) have adapted and utilized this survey. It is interesting to note that during the 94/95 project year there was pressure to try it and utilize the data. Several teams did this. However, since the 94/95 Strategic Project year is over, we have noticed that no one has utilized the survey instrument since. Our intent was to provide teams with a foundation experiment, a tested methodology, and a commitment to gather data. Only the tested methodology has been successful. Assessing customer satisfaction seems to be viewed as unnecessary and cumbersome—though we still believe it to be critical. This is an area in which we need to do more walking of the talk.

### Project: Customer Service Training

This project proved successful, though not as we originally designed it. The campus Employee Training and Development Department, in its efforts to support Quality, developed a Customer Service Training Program module that was adapted to meet each team's needs. The module introduced attributes of good customer service, and led teams to develop their own customer service goals. Participants evaluated the training well—BUT, no team has yet developed and published their customer service goals or operating principles. So, although the content and presentation of the training was seen as successful at the time, formal follow-up has not occurred. We can only hope that individual learning took place and that our interactions with customers have improved.

### Project: Training the Trainers

Anticipating that we needed to develop and/or improve the training ability of team leaders and work team leaders, we hired a consultant to design training modules that would accomplish this. Two modules were created, one for experienced trainers and the other for beginners. While 40 staff members attended one of these sessions, there existed a number of challenges or problems that stunted the success of this project.

For starters, we found that work team leaders and team leaders weren't necessarily the right target group. We lacked information regarding how on-the-job training was organized and accomplished within each team. To rectify this situation, we eventually invited any and all trainers to attend one of these sessions, regardless of their position.

Still, there was resistance. We learned that staff are not generally aware that the ability to teach or train others requires the development of a number of skills, including an awareness of adult learning theory and its application to work processes and an ability to adapt training methodology to learners' styles. We don't think this is unique to our organization, but it reflects how library workers have been trained in the past. Although most training did not change immediately, there are signs that integration of adult learning techniques is taking place in some areas of training this year.

### Project: Assessing Staff Training Needs

This project, designed to identify skills and abilities needed by members of each team, grew out of a very strong concern that we had put people on new teams and expected them to learn new skills without providing the necessary training. Since we knew that this was a major problem, we set out to identify those areas of need and to follow up with the appropriate training.

Nineteen of our 25 work teams completed a skills and abilities inventory, but we know of no team that followed up on their inventory in a formal manner to design a training program for team members. We assume that either the training got provided as a matter of course, or the work was not as new as expected.

Although the project was completed as designed, it was done so under duress and without much understanding about how and why it should be accomplished. While we never evaluated why it encountered so much resistance and misunderstanding, a number of things could have contributed to this phenomenon—there may not have been a need to do this, the reasons behind it were not communicated well to teams, or the inventory itself did not suit our needs.

In hindsight, rather than appointing one individual to accomplish a project of this magnitude, we probably should have created a team and charged them to accomplish two things: to assess the utility of this kind of project, and once that utility was established, to communicate its importance to each team.

### Project: Training Documentation

This is another project that was only marginally successful. While its purpose was to have each team create training documentation and make it available so that cross training and enhanced teamwork would occur, little time was spent communicating this to teams. Consequently, each team met only the minimal expectations, by developing check-lists of procedures. Many of these were helpful training guides, created to help individuals learn new tasks, but others were merely hastily put together lists.

### Project: Teambuilding

This project was designed to support teams in their developmental stages, and to help them learn teamwork concepts and skills. Our goals were to have each team complete a teamwork assessment instrument and to have each of them go through two teambuilding sessions. While 23 of 25 work teams completed the assessment instrument, only 17 of them completed the two teambuilding sessions.

Most of these sessions included a getting to know each other exercise (either through the sharing of individuals' Myers Briggs Type Indicator profiles or a similar sharing exercise) and an experiential problem solving exercise designed to help team members get a taste for team-ness and the stages of team development. Some of the sessions addressed barriers to effective team work, including issues of communication, goal orientation, and differing work styles. In order to help teams address some of these concerns, they were introduced to a number of group problem-solving and decision-making techniques.

Most sessions were evaluated positively. In fact, several teams have made it an objective to continue teambuilding sessions this year. Overall, this project was very successful in helping to build the team foundation. All team assessment, individual assessment evaluation with the team leader, and "just-in-time" teambuilding were key to the teams' readiness to learning.

### Tactic 5: Align Reward and Recognition Systems with Contribution to Teamwork and Goal Achievement

### Project: Conduct a Review of Current Salary, Classification, and Reward Systems for Alignment with Principles of a Team-Based Organization. Identify Key Issues and Develop a Timeline of Addressing Those Issues.

Our first project in this area proved to be too ambitious and was side-tracked when the University first agreed to, but then withdrew support for hiring a consultant to study team-based classification systems. However, discussion of the need to address this situation occurred throughout the year. Strategic budget decisions were made which increased staff salaries and a "career progression" fund was created that supported staff in learning and applying appropriate new skills needed to meet changing customer expectations. This project also illustrated the need to design a team-based performance evaluation system and this is being pursued by this year's strategic planning project team.

### Project: Teams Share Celebration Options and Activities with Each Other

Our second, and last project under Tactic 5 was created to increase our efforts at recognizing and celebrating staff accomplishments. All Library teams were asked to share how they were currently doing this and a compiled list was distributed to all teams in hopes they would be inspired to find new and creative ways to reward hard work, commitment to change, and project accomplishment.

The Dean of the Library has also made an effort to include more celebratory occasions by sponsoring all staff recognition meetings, special dinners for teams completing major projects, and by providing cups, tee-shirts, and calculators as gifts to these teams. Informal recognition still needs to be encouraged however, since work and task focus seem to take over too easily.

## REFLECTIONS: WHAT WORKED AND WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

### Involving Staff in the Creation and Implementation of Training and Effective Team Support Processes.

Widening the circle of responsibility is key to developing awareness of accountability and self-responsibility for success. The staff involved learned through practice, which greatly facilitated the development of the skills and knowledge they needed to complete their projects.

There was a clear agenda for supporting training and skill development related to the organizational structure and its new requirements. Our plan was evident and our project goals known by the entire staff. Regular reporting requirements also kept us on track in planning, designing and offering the training and support embedded within each project.

Training for staff and team development was integrated into the Strategic Plan and well supported with additional funds. The difficulty of change and constant new learning were acknowledged, and organizational resources were shifted to provide resources (time and money) to help staff begin this journey. In sum, $28,900 was provided for the accomplishment of these projects. Our efforts, resources, and goals were all focused and aligned with the Library's long range strategic goals.

Quantifiable goal setting helped us work hard to achieve the expected result and created tensions at the same time. Giving ourselves a one-year time frame in which to complete our projects misguided us. Instead, we should have planned to reach these goals over a two- to three-year time frame. Knowing that we were only a one-year team (we would no longer exist at the end of the year) contributed to our uncertainty that what we designed would be followed up on and expanded to staff who did not participate.

We chose 14 of the 28 areas of need and called them the "critical few." We felt we needed to address all of these because we knew that the beginning stages of implementing a total restructuring process and culture change required an overwhelming number of things to do. We used our own accumulated wisdom, reactions from all staff, and data gathered from a staff development needs assessment survey to determine the annual projects and their goals. This led us to select too many projects and to ignore the concern expressed by the Strategic Long Range Planning Team that we had lost focus on the "critical few."

In our Strategic Planning process, we were guided to set numerical/quantifiable indicators and goals so we could measure our success or lack thereof at the end of the year. This was incredibly useful, but, again, in our enthusiasm to make great progress, we set unrealistic goals for staff participation. It was hard to see where training only some staff in skills would have the appropriate "foundation-building" effect. And, although we calculated that the actual amount of time that our projects would take staff was an estimated 5% of their total time, their reaction to MORE things to learn was a barrier.

Although the goals we set were considered "too high," setting them this way motivated us to continue our efforts to achieve them creatively. This was key to our learning and to our ability to increase our capacity to juggle multiple projects with regular work. We knew the importance staff learning would play in making the new organization a success, so we came up with innovative ways of using consultants, designing sessions, partnering with others, marketing training, and discovering new ways of assessing and implementing. All in all, we came close to achieving many of the critical goals. Our own learning was also vastly increased.

### Deeper Analysis Needed/Too Many Projects

We did not know which were the key "foundation" areas or "drivers" that would yield us the biggest impact. We had not learned ID Graphing, a planning tool that would have greatly aided us in narrowing the areas of need to the critical few, but we did use a Prioritization Decision Matrix, using a set of criteria that may not have been the best.

### Clearly Written Charges

In some cases, we did not communicate as clearly as we could have with the project owners about our expectations for each project. However, demonstrating their own fortitude and intelligence, some teams set their own goals and parameters as they learned more about the issues related to their projects. Still, lack of written charges that could be revised along the way resulted in some confusion and time-consuming meetings.

## Leadership Support

Although the projects we identified and set out to accomplish were approved for full budget support by the Planning and Budget Advisory Group and the Dean's Cabinet, there remained a lack of dialogue between the Management Review Team and the rest of the staff, especially the leadership group. This led to a lack of commitment to achieving all our project goals.

This came from several sources: a lack of understanding about our thinking and how it related to the whole library restructuring, the number of overwhelming challenges faced by team leaders and staff during this year in learning new work and new roles, a lack of shared vision of the need for and importance of these projects, a reluctance on the part of some team leaders and staff seriously to commit to the new organization concepts, and disagreement on content, design, and participation goals we had set. Communication about the myriad issues that developed was challenging and incomplete.

Our strongly-held belief in the value of completing these projects also proved to be a barrier to true dialogue. We were resistant to being criticized, especially after we put in so many hours of hard work. We were only slightly open to having our assumptions questioned.

## Management Review/Guidance Team Concept

While this first year had its successes and problems, we learned a great deal about how to share responsibility widely. We had to learn how to give constructive, thought-provoking feedback to another team without taking over their work or creating communication barriers. The goal of a Management Review Team is to support teams as they solve their own problems. As a Guidance Team, our own members' commitment waxed and waned as other priorities came up. Ownership of results and shared concern for success continued, however, throughout the year.

## First Year of Staff-Driven Strategic Planning

We experienced a reaction similar to that experienced by other Strategic Planning Tactic Teams in that in this first year of 30 or more annual projects, organized separately from regular team work, staff often felt as though these projects were "additional" and "not as important" as what had been called their "key" work (the functions assigned to the team that directly served the customer) activities. They felt that we had created new "competing" pressures on their time, and that we were going against our renewed focus of customer service. In general, they were often unwilling and unprepared to reprioritize their work in order to focus on developing skills and capabilities for a new future.

The conflict between the offering of current, unexamined services and preparation for the future, which involves studying processes and developing new skills and capabilities, is real and difficult to address.

### Summary:

We have concluded that we had a successful year for a number of reasons. We began to build a foundation of understanding amongst the staff of a number of key concepts—those principles, tools, and values necessary to build an effective organization for the future. We also readied the staff and ourselves for a deeper understanding and appreciation of the challenges of becoming continuous learners. Finally, we set the stage for expanding the responsibility for learning through our use of the Strategic Planning process as a vehicle for setting the team and staff development agenda.

## OTHER INITIATIVES:

### Funding Support:

While most of our efforts focused on these strategic projects, we continued to support staff travel to workshops and conferences they or we identified as key to developing our organizational capabilities. Many of these included trips to conferences such as Educom and other forums that introduced new technologies. Staff were also supported with funding for attendance at workshops that introduced them to new software, that helped them deal with stress and conflict, and that exposed them to new concepts such as Peter Senge's theory of the learning organization.

### New Staff Orientation:

Other initiatives undertaken this year included the development of a new staff orientation program which included a number of training modules, (effective meetings, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Customer Service training, and a review of the reasoning and philosophy behind the restructuring) and the creation of a new staff handbook.

### Team Leader and Cabinet Training:

Dean's Cabinet also continued to receive training in leadership skills and communication skills. Newly hired Cabinet members were integrated into the group through teambuilding. Work team leaders were also included in some of these sessions.

### Facilitation Skills:

Facilitation skills training was offered to "volunteer facilitators." This workshop was useful in introducing basic facilitation tools and techniques. Participants found that practice was key to developing successful facilitation skills. Follow-up sessions where ideas and tools were shared helped further to develop these individuals skills.

### Changing Role of the Staff Development Committee:

The Staff Development Committee found that its role was diminishing, since most of the training that took place was now coordinated by the Assistant Dean for Staff Development, Recruitment and Diversity, the Assistant Dean for Team Facilitation and two half time support staff. Toward the end of 94/95 the committee was abolished and a new group, the Staff Development Advisory Board was created to help the Assistant to the Dean for Staff Development Recruitment and Diversity provide information about training opportunities to each team and to conduct team needs assessment. This group is different from the former Staff Development Committee as it does not get involved in the coordination of training. Members also consist of representatives from each team, unlike the former Staff Development Committee.

### Process Improvement in the Library:

We also worked closely with the experimental Process Improvement Teams that were formed to address other strategic initiatives. It was here that much of our learning took place. We learned the importance of just-in-time training, of learning by doing meaningful and challenging new work, and about the importance of the relationship of individual skill and team development to overall success. We've learned that empowering teams in a structured, guided, accountable, and supported mode is key to their success.

Working closely with teams that were actually changing the overall current processes intended to meet and exceed customer expectations gave us the chance to learn how to better prepare the entire Library for understanding, accepting, and embracing change. We have learned that the best way to do this is to charge a team with discovering the need to change and then to give them the tools and the expertise (through training and the application of new skills) to analyze and develop the data that will drive the change. Empowering them to develop and choose, through a structured, scientific process, the best ways to change processes and develop technological innovations was a successful learning experience. Giving them responsibility for implementation increased their commitment to take pride in their solutions.

### Summary:

Of our 18 strategic projects, seven achieved the goals originally specified or modified by the team in charge; another seven achieved an estimated 60–80% of their defined goal; and four did not achieve their goal in any substantive way. Staff who attended training and teambuilding sessions evaluated them positively directly after the sessions, but successful transfer of skills and new behaviors may or may not have occurred.

Understanding of concepts and terminology, utilization of analytical tools and approaches, and development of interpersonal capabilities has increased dramatically, as has individual teams willingness to take responsibility for continued learning.

In spite of our many shortfalls, we have taken major steps in further laying the foundation for building an effective organization in which staff are committed to our future success "in supporting the research and education needs of a diverse, ever-changing University community,"—our 1994/95 Strategic Objective.

### FOURTH YEAR: 1995/96—DEVELOPING STRATEGIC ANNUAL PLANS TO BECOME A LEARNING ORGANIZATION: EMPOWERMENT OF TEAMS AND STAFF

In our fourth year, we have continued our efforts to learn how best to foster a supportive, learning environment while continuing to focus on serving customer needs and providing the necessary training staff need to accomplish this. We are fine tuning what works, looking for new strategies and deeper

understanding, and letting go of what does not. Many of the initiatives taken on this year are similar to last year's, but there are some new developments taking shape.

## The Strategic Long Range Planning Team

Once again, the Strategic Long Range Planning Team was charged to develop five key strategic objectives that would enable the Library to move forward and at the same time be in alignment with the University's strategic directions. This year, the group continued its use of the management by planning model, but modified it somewhat. The team learns as it goes, through the current situation analysis process, through coordination of the annual strategic objectives setting process, and through its attempts at creating a staff driven mission statement. The team is just about ready, in fact, to share a draft of the Library mission statement with the rest of the Library. Interestingly, SLRP has learned that the Mission must not only be clear and brief, but that it does not stand alone—vision and values are key ingredients in completing the overall picture of the Library's purpose and role in a University setting.

## The Annual Plan

Last year's strategic objective dealing with the Library environment and culture was re-worded. Whereas before it read:

> To create a Library environment and culture that supports the research and education needs of a diverse, ever-changing University community.

It now reads:

> To transform the library environment and culture to improve the way the staff are supported in their achievement of the library's goals.

This reflects the clearer understanding of our transformational imperative to change a culture, not just build our organizational effectiveness, and it is a vital revision of our direction and scope in developing staff and teams and their future success.

Among the many changes that occurred this year, one was that SLRP used a modified version of the management by planning model to design the Library's strategic initiatives. In a reaction to the cumbersome effect of the tiered, "waterfall-like", process one of these modifications included the elimi-

nation of the tactic level of planning. Instead, as part of the above strategic objective, a team was formed to develop the following strategies and projects. Project teams were then formed to carry out these projects:

### 1: Provide an Environment Which Encourages, Supports, and Respects All Staff

*Project A: Identify values, communicate vision, hold leadership accountable for modeling desired behaviors*

### 2: Support Staff Development Through Continuous Learning, As Well As Training, to Meet Changing Work Requirements

*Project A: Shift the Library's focus from training to learning*

### 3: Address the Human Resource Needs of the Staff Through Policies, Procedures, and Structures Developed by the Staff.

*Project A: Designing a fair and equitable performance evaluation system for all staff.*

*Project B: Study the human resources issues in the Library, identify problems, and recommend solutions*

Teams have been formed, charged and are working on these projects now, but it is too early to predict their success. However, what we do know is that involving a new and different set of staff (the Dean for Team Facilitation and the Assistant to the Dean for Staff Development, Diversity and Recruitment were not involved in designing the projects this time around) did mean that there was little time and formal opportunity to dialogue about what was learned the previous year. This year's teams have also decided to organize themselves and their charges more loosely than last year's team, i.e., most have no quantifiable goals or indicators. This year's teams are more exploratory, involving a new group of staff in developing ideas for how to increase the learning capability of the organization.

As for our own roles as Assistant to the Dean for Staff Development, Recruitment and Diversity and the Assistant Dean for Team Facilitation, it is assumed we will continue with our responsibilities,

building on the previous year's experiences and changing our approaches as needed. We are engaged in a number of initiatives outside the Annual planning process. What follows are descriptions of some of these:

### Using a bottom-up approach to provide needs-based, just-in-time training:

The Staff Development Advisory Board plays a key role in encouraging their respective teams to take ownership of team training and learning needs. This year, members were guided to encourage their teams to address learning/training needs during the objectives setting process early in the 95/96 fiscal year.

In contrast, the role we play is to guide and assist teams in the needs assessment process and to design appropriate learning activities, interventions and formal training. We are also encouraging staff to communicate their needs to us regularly through the Staff Development Advisory Board and through the use of "request for facilitation forms," so that just-in-time training and team building can take place.

### More teambuilding offered to cross functional teams and more back-up trainers available to do this.

As more and more cross functional teams are formed throughout the Library, we have found it necessary to provide them with initial training in the team process in order for them to begin development as a team. To help us meet this need, we have trained a group of over fifteen backup volunteer facilitators from throughout the Library in the principles of teamwork and the use of problem solving and prioritization techniques. The challenge for these facilitators is to be prepared to know what to do, to do good assessment of issues, and to design appropriate learning opportunities that will move each team forward.

### Continuation of new staff orientation program

As we continue to hire new staff, we think it is imperative that for them to be successful here, they learn about our organizational structure, philosophy, and related concepts and practices. For this reason, the new staff orientation program continues and is widely supported. Modifications from last year include the alignment of the library-wide new staff orientation program with orientation taking place within individual teams. In addition to providing

training on the basics of customer service principles, effective meetings, and total quality concepts, we continue to provide offerings on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and a review of the restructuring. This year, we will also be including for the first time a module on diversity.

### Continued Diversity Initiatives

Diversity programs and visits by guest speakers continue. A new group of staff members has joined the Library Diversity Council, which has made plans to continue our tradition of offering thought-provoking, fun and celebratory programs for the staff. Included in this year's offerings was a site visit by the Association of Research Libraries Diversity Consultant, Kriza Jennings, Library co-sponsorship of a number of campus programs, including a very well-attended and -received presentation by Cornell West, and a videoconference on affirmative action. In the coming months, we plan to offer a Chinese New Year celebration and a workshop on homophobia in the workplace.

### Revised Objectives Setting Process

This year we decided to redesign the training session on developing team objectives for Team Leaders and volunteer facilitators. Overall, a more extensive process of objectives development was pursued as we learned from last year's mistakes. Even so, the process this year was successful in some teams and seen as a barrier in others. Needs assessment data is still unavailable (except in one team) and learning of project management skills, prioritization skills, and owner responsibility is slow in occurring. In 95/96 we asked teams to align their projects with the strategic plan. Team objectives and Library Strategic Objectives are still seen as not in alignment, although some progress has been made. There is also overlap between team objectives and some cross-functional team goals. We will continue to re-think this important process.

### Process Improvement

We continue to provide support for our crucial Process Improvement Teams as they learn and train others in the analytical techniques and teamwork necessary to make transformational improvements in process effectiveness, cost reduction and customer satisfaction.

We have also developed a Change Management Support Program for teams affected by the radically

changed work processes that result from Process Improvement (now called Business Process Re-engineering). This program is designed to expose affected staff to: the reasons for studying their areas—the budget, technological, and competitive environment in which we operate, and to the techniques being used by the Process Improvement Team to study their processes. We hope this will help the staff prepare for inevitable changes designed by their teammates and other staff in the Library. The goal of this program is to encourage staff to conduct their own assessment of their skills and abilities and to identify future capabilities needed by the Library. If we are successful, the Library will then offer training in learning new skills and support for staff who will be dislocated. We hope that this partnership of organizational and individual responsibility will increase the desirability for and commitment to continuous learning.

### Learning Through Regular Work

Teams are still experimenting and looking for ways to be successful, as they are challenged by their new roles. While at times learning teamwork can be painful, most real learning is occurring in the day-to-day team process. Our role is to offer focused support, encouragement and appropriate resources to these teams as they grow and mature.

### New Partnerships:

This year, the campus Human Resources Department began its own restructuring process, and as a result has offered to continue to provide assistance and support to the Library in a number of innovative ways. These include the development of a partnership program with the Library, whereby members of the Human Resources Team participate as full members of some of the Library's annual project teams. In addition, trainers from the former Employee Development and Training Department, rather than merely responding to needs with training, have begun to assist teams in assessing and identifying true needs. Since this is a brand new initiative, the success of these efforts has yet to be determined.

### Continued Offerings That Support Staff Well-Being

We continue to offer a number of programs that assist staff in their general well being. Some of those that have already taken place this year include training sessions on the use of CPR, computer ergonomics and workplace safety. A health screening program offered in conjunction with the campus Employee Wellness department is in the planning stages.

### CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, we have learned a great deal and have made an incredible amount of progress these past four years. While we have had our share of blunders, many of our initiatives have been quite successful. Process improvement for example, has yielded incredibly positive results. Teambuilding efforts are also successful in many cases. Development of training needs from the ground up has led to team "ownership" of needs, another positive step. Finally, we have learned that change is constant. The challenge is to anticipate it, be open to it and flexible enough to be able to embrace and learn from it and further develop our organizational and individual capabilities to respond to it. This is our goal as a learning organization.