

LLAMA Dialogue with Directors Discussion Group: 2018 ALA Midwinter (Denver) 2/12/2018

Edra Waterman (Library Director, Hamilton East Public Library, Noblesville, IL) served as the session moderator and note taker.

14 attendees were at the session.

Topics Covered

- Dealing with unmotivated staff/People management in general; Culture shift/resistance to change; transition between traditional library model and more Anythink/bookstore model; How to let go of the past
 - Discussion focused on challenge if staff are unionized, and several recommended bringing in an outside consultant to work with staff.
 - Some entrenched staff will choose to leave on their own if the pace of change is strong
 - Culture shift starts with leadership, can spread like fire. Consensus and staff involvement does wonders. Once you get a tipping point of staff involved, you are in good shape. Try to isolate nay-sayers.
 - Look for idea or change “champions” to carry things forward
 - Acknowledge losses, celebrate what was by thanking those who built it while still moving forward
 - A supportive Board is critical; be sure to pass along Board praise to staff
 - Recommended *Transitions* by William Bridges
- Creating welcoming spaces in a “chopped up” building, and what to do when library space is viewed as up for grabs
 - Talk about the impact on students of a confusing space
 - Look for cost effective wayfinding options, rearrange what you can
 - Can other entities using the space help with this message? Can they be partners?
 - Look for support from staff, start small
- How to deal with having an all new leader and/or leadership team?
 - This is an opportunity to start from scratch
 - Consider *Five Dysfunctions of a Team* by Lencioni
 - Start discussions with acknowledgement of history
 - Reframe what we do and how we do it
- The tension between social justice and neutrality in libraries, especially with socially conscious new librarians

- Tension between a conservative community and progressive librarians is real, how do we balance?
 - Is it the role of the library to advance social justice?
 - We were taught balance as a core value—some would call that false equivalency
 - One POV is that academic libraries=academic discourse; creating a safe space to disagree is critical
 - ALA Code of Professional ethics
 - Conservative staff can feel targeted by liberal staff
 - Are our emerging leaders evolving to a standpoint that does not separate personal passions and professional ethics?
 - **Who are we as a profession?**
- How do you apply “liberal” tech, such as solar panels in a very conservative community?
 - Talk about the \$\$\$
 - Any public/academic partnerships?
 - One public does a family library service program for students
 - There are great opportunities for universities to support public libraries through speakers, etc