

Editor's Introduction

Striving for Remarkable

Beth Blakesley

Where has the summer gone? This common refrain becomes more and more urgently uttered as the fall looms ahead. In academic settings, this time of year is often one for reviewing achievements, regretting not having enough time to have done more, and making plans for the months ahead. A number of organizational changes and a huge consortial ILS migration project have made planning and contemplation of the future particularly challenging here. Seeing the calendar for October already filling up is alternately exhilarating and exhausting.

This past June at Annual, I was fortunate to attend the LLAMA/ACRL joint program that featured Dr. Karol Wsylyshyn. Many of the things she said keep coming back to me over these past couple of months. She spoke about attributes and characteristics of leaders, including emotional intelligence, a right brain – left brain balance, and dedication to the organization, rather than to one's self. All of these are important aspects of effective leadership, but during times of great change they seem even more necessary. Based on the presence or absence of these qualities, Wsylyshyn identified three basic types of leaders: remarkable, perilous, and toxic.

Effective leadership will certainly make major transitions and organizational changes easier, but I believe it is also crucial for everyone to be more cognizant of our own contributions and patterns, regardless of where we are on the ladder. Wsylyshyn didn't address situations where your subordinates or lateral peers are toxic. As we are all human, it is impossible to be remarkable every minute, but we can certainly work to not be generally perilous. As for toxic, her advice for workers with a toxic boss ("Leave.") and her policy regarding clients who are toxic (she refuses the consulting contract and tells the firm to put together a severance package for the toxic person) makes clear what we should strive for in that arena.

This issue of LL&M includes an array of articles to provoke thoughts about leadership and management practices. New LLAMA president Catherine Friedman encourages us to be active members in our organization. In our columns, Leo Lo outlines ways to improve the search process in academic libraries, while Jennifer Bartlett addresses mentoring. Pixey Mosley invites us to consider how and why we make choices and to accept our own agency in those choices. In our feature articles, Eric C. Shoaf and Nathan Flowers present findings from their research on

librarian retirement plans and the impact on our professional lives, while Janet Tapper, Richard J. Severson, Noelle Stello and Delia Shupe describe methods of collaboration prevalent in medical education, which could be applied to many other disciplines. Finally, Angel Clemons and Tyler Goldberg present a research article regarding the role of the external reviewer in faculty librarian tenure and promotion decisions.

As always, I invite comments and feedback about the journal. Please don't hesitate to contact me with questions or suggestions.

Enjoy the rest of the summer!

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Suggested Readings:

Wsylylshyn, Karol M. *Behind the Executive Door: Unexpected Lessons for Managing Your Boss and Career*. New York: Springer, 2011.

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