

THE LIBRARIAN AS A MANAGER



**WHAT YOU NEED
TO KNOW**

Mac - Anthony Cobblah

**THE LIBRARIAN AS A MANAGER:
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

MAC-ANTHONY COBBLAH

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FOREWORD

Librarianship remains one of the most important professions in the world. The present exponential rate at which information and knowledge are being generated justify the growing need for libraries of all kinds to adapt strategic approaches to the management of libraries.

It is worthy to note that this book is written by a young professional who has had the opportunity to work at the middle and senior management levels in Research and Academic libraries. This, therefore, explains the reason why the book practically describes the management skills required by Librarians and the routine operations involved in managing libraries of all kinds. Most importantly, the book provides adequate information about what Librarians in management positions should know. It also provides a strategic plan model that Librarians should adopt for effective management of libraries.

A library must ensure that it is operating as efficiently as possible. It should examine whether all the tasks and activities it routinely performs, are still adding value. Similarly, it should be exploring different ways of accomplishing the same tasks. Library managers must create the environment that is supportive of innovation.

I recommend this book for all Librarians, Information Professionals, Students, Researchers, Heads of Educational Institutions and Corporate Organizations as well as the general public.

Professor Anaba Alemna
University of Ghana
Legon

PREFACE

As a practising Librarian for the past 12 years, I have observed at first-hand the growing need for Librarians, Heads of Institutions and Organizations, and various library user communities to understand library operations and what is involved in managing modern libraries.

I have attempted to focus on management skills or qualities that are required for the successful management of libraries.

Those who do not understand Librarianship will discover from this book that library management involves many activities and functions. It certainly goes beyond acquisitions and safe keeping of library materials.

It is hoped that the book will help Librarians of all kinds to adapt to strategic management approach in managing their libraries. Thus, libraries will become effective and productive to user communities.

The book will also help Heads of Institutions and Organizations as well as user communities to understand and appreciate that libraries need maximum support and cooperation to enable them provide the requisite information services.

Mac-Anthony Cobblah

THE MANAGER AND THE CONCEPT OF MANAGEMENT

WHO IS A MANAGER?

A manager is a person tasked with overseeing one or more employees or departments to ensure these employees or departments carry out assigned duties as required.

Depending on the size of the company or organization, there might be a single, dual, or triple management layer involved.

In large companies, management is basically divided into three tiers: upper or senior management, middle-level management, and lower-level management.

Diagram 1: General Management Structure

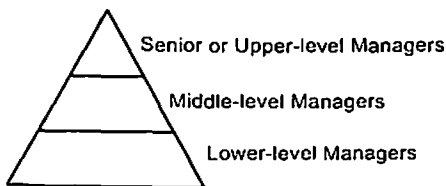
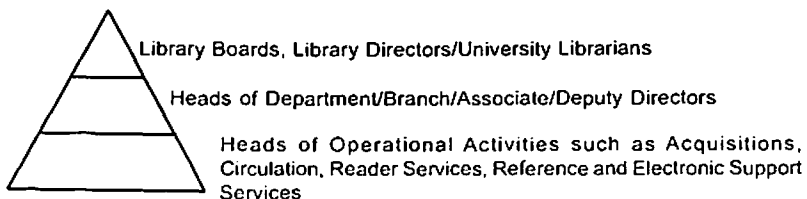


Diagram 2: Management Structure in the Library System



Decisions made at the lower level of management are normally short-term decisions that are geared toward basic operational needs. In the library system, the professional librarians who head the various operational activities, such as Acquisitions, Cataloguing, Reader services and Electronic support services, represent the lower level of management.

Middle-level management includes supervisors that solve problems with the lower-level management tier. Middle-level management is also responsible for reporting to upper-level management, though this function has largely been replaced with technology that has automated the reporting process. The departmental heads, branch managers and deputy directors represent the middle-level management in the library system.

A manager at this level may make tactical decisions about how best to handle challenging situations that arise.

Upper or senior-level management is responsible for overseeing and guiding the business to success through making strategic long-term decisions. Strategies are based on analyzing data and extrapolating plans of action that address relevant issues while improving the bottom-line wherever possible.

Library boards, library directors or university librarians represent the senior-level management in the library.

A managerial position of any kind holds more responsibility than a simple employee and generally attracts a higher wage. Advanced managerial positions normally require a university degree and experience, though companies and organizations differ in structure and in requirements.

WHAT MANAGERS DO

Management is an art and science. It is the art of making people more effective than they would have been without the manager.

The science is how the manager does it. Managers do four basic things: plan, organize, direct and monitor.

The manager is primarily responsible for:

- Planning
- Organizing
- Staffing
- Directing
- Controlling

Planning

Drucker (1927) has defined planning as a continuous process of making present entrepreneurial decisions systematically and with best possible knowledge of their futurity, organizing systematically the efforts needed to carry out these decisions, and measuring the results of these decisions against the expectations through organized and systematic feedback.

Planning consists of identifying the overall purpose of a project, activities to be performed and their sequence, and resources required to accomplish them. If any of these four elements is missing, plans will have less chance for success.

Organizing

The process of organizing consists of dividing activities, assigning duties, and delegating authority for effective operation and achievement of goals.

The bigger the organization, the more complex is the job of organizing people and their work because face-to-face communication becomes difficult. The organizing process in general involves the following steps:

- dividing activities into convenient groups;
- allocating activities of different departments and assigning duties;

- delegating authority and fixing responsibility for performance;
- coordinating these activities throughout the organization.

To organize a business is to provide it with everything useful to its functioning: raw materials, tools, capital, and personnel. These may be divided into two main sections, the material and human organization.

Staffing

Staffing involves the process of recruiting, training, developing, compensating, and evaluating employees; and maintaining the workforce with proper incentives and motivations.

It is important managers take this function very seriously, because the human element is the most vital factor in the process of management, and people differ in their intelligence, knowledge, age and attitudes.

Directing

Directing is said to be a process in which managers instruct, guide, and oversee the performance of workers to achieve predetermined goals.

Directing is at the heart of the management process. Directing initiates action, and it is from here actual work starts. It can also be described as providing guidance to workers.

Besides, directing consists of processes or techniques by which instructions are issued and operations executed as originally planned.

Leaders matter in all types of organizations. The responsibility of guiding, supervising activities and operations falls on managers at different levels.

Merely planning, organizing, and staffing are not enough to put the task in motion. People maintaining the organization have to be guided, motivated, and supervised by managers to get the desired results.

Controlling

The function of control consists of those activities that are undertaken to ensure that the events do not deviate from the pre-arranged plans.

The activities consist of establishing standards for work performance and comparing it to these set standards and taking corrective actions as and when needed to correct any deviations.

According to Fayol (1991), control consists of verifying whether everything occurs in conformity with the plan adopted, instructions issued, and principles established.

It has the objective of pointing out weaknesses and errors to rectify them and prevent recurrence.

Coordinating

Some authorities view coordination as a separate function of management. Fayol (1991), for instance, included coordination as one of the elements of management.

However, management thinkers of today feel that coordination is all pervasive and permeates every function of the management process.

Thus, planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling all help managers to achieve proper coordination. In the planning process, for instance, departmental plans are integrated into a master plan ensuring adequate coordination.

Similarly, the primary purpose of organizing is to secure coordination; particularly, interdepartmental and interpersonal coordination is also secured through proper direction of the human effort by exercising effective leadership, guidance, motivation, supervision, communication and suchlike. The control process also requires coordination.

In these roles, managers also perform several duties that are important to the successful functioning of any organization. To coordinate is to harmonize all the activities of concern to facilitate its workings and success.

QUALITIES OF A GOOD MANAGER

Becoming a successful or good manager is not an easy task. It is not only a matter of making the right decisions for the company or organization, but the manager also needs to be a good leader. Thus, the need is to know how to encounter and handle various problems.

Knowledge is necessary, but more important is a good vision of the future of the company or organization and the ability to create a good working team. The most important qualities that a successful manager needs are discussed.

Strategy

The manager must have a strategy in place to achieve the department's vision and mission. The manager works with team members to develop the strategy and plan. Then a process is used to execute the strategy. Usually, the process is an element of the company's overall development process for developing products and services.

Planning

To reach some goals, a manager needs a visualized plan for the short-term; but this is more important for the long-

term. A plan consists of investments that are useful for the long-term.

These investments might have a negative impact on the profits of the company in the early years, but would result in an increase in profits and a rise in turnover subsequently.

A Good Teacher

A manager needs a good team, and knows the goals that need to be reached. Thus, communication with the team is important. The manager teaches the employees what their tasks and responsibilities are, and gives them the chance to share their ideas and work in the most efficient way. Giving commands in a respectful way is the key to success.

A Good Listener

Working with a team means that the manager needs to understand the attitudes of the employees, and also their motivations; and try to find solutions to problems as they occur.

A good listener is someone with an open-minded attitude who always welcomes the suggestions of employees or teammates.

It is important for managers to listen to employees who disagree with their decisions, and then come to an acceptable compromise. Managers need to treat their employees equally, regardless of race, religion, age, sex or other factors.

Delegation

A manager is the leader of the establishment, and is responsible for all the work that takes place in the company or department. A manager needs to delegate some tasks to the employees, but cannot give away ultimate responsibility.

Therefore, the manager needs to build a staff team with different responsibilities; and staff members need to be concerned about the final result of their tasks. Communication is important, and tasks that are executed are discussed with the team.

Self-confidence

Managers should believe in themselves and in their abilities. They should not be nervous when something fails, but be optimistic about the outcome of the next plans. They should avoid stress, and not fear that goals cannot be achieved.

Motivation of Employees

Managers need to respect their employees. Employees want their work to be appreciated. Managers should work out a reward system to motivate employees. A good suggestion is to determine what kind of reward employees respond to; maybe some bonuses if they reach their goals, or the kind of recognition that would encourage them to accept more responsibilities and receive more money.

Flexibility and Patience

A good manager needs to give commands for the necessary tasks to be executed, but has to be flexible in their dealings with the team. Employees should be given the opportunity to express their opinions on how the work should be executed.

Flexibility means that it is possible to reach an agreement. Managers should not take an attitude that, "I am the 'Boss', and only I know the right decision". Give the employees the necessary time for their work. Patience is the key to success.

Teamwork

Finally, a successful manager needs to work hard and figure out situations in which good teamwork is possible.

The key to success is honesty and teamwork in which everyone has positive input. A successful manager works together with the team.

Each member of the team is necessary for overall success, and a good manager knows the importance of teamwork.

WHAT A NEW MANAGER SHOULD KNOW

The basic principles of a manager are to build a unique team that takes pride in its work. To accomplish the goals of the organization requires self-discipline as well as vision, but the vision is not so hard to actualize if some of the following issues are given careful attention:

1. Know the accepted framework of operation: know what is binding on the employees.
2. Keep morale high by cultivating productive work relationships and terminating mismatched ones.
3. Communicate with departmental staff, the administration, and the clients. Bring all the three together whenever possible.
4. Include people in deliberations, either in formal or informal meetings. This procedure makes people aware of the fact that they are needed.
5. Share information about changes or long-range plans. This procedure conveys a sense of trust and respect, and makes people feel that the organization is going somewhere.
6. Hire and train people slowly and carefully. This procedure communicates a sense of respect for who we are and what we do.
7. Be open to a fair and candid dialogue with the union representatives or the staff associations.

CHECKLIST FOR NEW LIBRARY MANAGERS

Becoming Familiar

1. Go around the library and meet the people who work there.
2. Understand the organizational chart.
3. Establish the habit of communicating with the support staff.
4. Understand the departmental responsibilities and the work flow.
5. Know the technology in use and what you want from it.
6. Look over procedures and arrange to have them written if they are not yet in written form.

Labour-Management Relations

1. Read the contracts
2. Know the salary and benefit packages
3. Know the work rules

Staff Development

1. Become acquainted with the strengths of each staff person.
2. Have a plan for staff growth and job development.
3. Have a plan for future changes in job description.

Hiring

1. Assess the needs, review the job description, state the requirements, make any changes necessary, think through expectations.
2. Be aware of the affirmative action plan and how it would be implemented.
3. Advertise positions
4. Review applications

Interviewing

1. Have a list of questions ready
2. Have another person with you in the interview
3. Encourage the interviewee to talk

4. Concentrate on getting to know the person
5. Settle only for the best candidate; readvertise if necessary

Training

1. Have a goal for each training session
2. Have a time frame
3. Understand how the individual learns best
4. Give the person a chance to operate alone
5. Meet constantly, check work, provide feedback
6. Give the staff written procedures to work with
7. Give orientation to new staff.

Personal Interactions

1. Take time to talk to everyone each day if possible
2. Confront problems tactfully and at an appropriate time
3. Share information; ask for advice
4. Be available

LIBRARIANSHIP

WHO IS A LIBRARIAN?

A Librarian is a professionally trained person responsible for the care of a library and its contents; including selecting, processing and organizing materials, and delivering information, instruction and loan services to meet the needs of its users.

In an online environment, the role of the Librarian is to manage and mediate access to information, which may exist only in electronic form (James, 2005).

CAREERS IN LIBRARIANSHIP

One can pursue a wide variety of career paths within the library system, depending on one's interest and background. It is possible to plan your career from the entry level to the top-level management.

Also, one gets the opportunity to decide on the type of library to work with.

With many possible career paths in libraries, the education, experience and skills required also vary from job to job. As the journey begins, it is good to have a general understanding of the type of job one is interested in within the library setting of one's choice.

Taking a career in librarianship gives a new life. Librarians can advance and enhance their careers without becoming a library director.

A library director is able to execute a plan, and has the opportunity to set objectives or goals for the library.

The career of the Librarian includes many destinations, some intended, some actual; and no matter what happens along the way, Librarians should examine their goals, interests, skills and qualifications.

They should seek mentors and supervisors to help navigate the best career path. Librarians should not be so focused on the future and ruin the immediate responsibilities. However, they should do annual career check-ups to re-assess where they are in relation to their career goals.

TYPES OF LIBRARY JOBS

Just as not everyone who works in a hospital is a doctor, not everyone who works in a library is a Librarian.

A wide variety of jobs are available in a library system, and all are important. The jobs involve answering questions, hiring staff, or preparing a story time; all must be executed to keep the library running. Job titles and descriptions vary from library to library, but there are some similarities.

Pages

Pages are library staff who are usually responsible for putting books and other items that are returned in their proper places on the shelves.

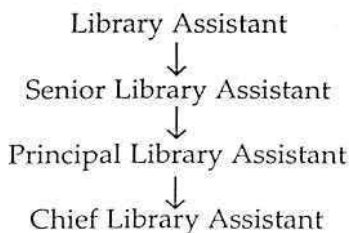
They are also responsible for keeping items in the right order. Some handle requests for retrieving materials that are in secured areas, and others may be responsible for checking items back. The page job is usually part-time.

Library Assistants

Library Assistants generally perform clerical duties. They are often mistaken for Librarians, because they are the 'first face' people see in libraries. For most libraries, checkout desks are near the entrance, and are usually managed by Library Assistants.

Library Assistants often check materials out and in, collect fines and fees, answer general phone questions, issue library cards, process new library materials, and assist with items on reserve.

Career Progress for Library Assistants in Academic Libraries



Educational Requirements for Library Assistants

Educational requirements for Library Assistants range from a Diploma to Bachelor of Arts Degree in Librarianship/Information Science or Information Management.

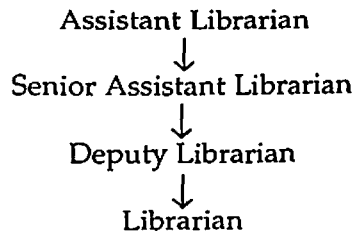
Librarians

Librarians help people with research questions, decide what items to purchase and to discard, offer programmes and training, help people use the Internet, build websites and more.

Specialized Librarians may run computer systems, work with subject specialists, and also maintain the records for the online catalogue. The Librarian's job is often full-time.

Professional Librarians can work in various capacities as Reference Librarian, Collection Development Librarian, Acquisition Librarian, Cataloguer, Subject Specialist Librarian, System Librarian, and as Reader Services Librarian. These are lower-level managers in the library system who may be in charge of the basic routine library operations.

Career Progress for Librarians in Academic Libraries



Library Managers

Library Managers such as departmental/branch managers and assistant/deputy/associate directors are typically middle-level managers responsible for the operations of departments or functional areas such as "branch libraries". As a manager, they may be responsible for work schedules, employee evaluations, training, and managing budgets.

Academic Librarians

Academic Librarians, who are sometimes referred to as University or College Librarians, provide public and technical services, instruction, and collection development in postsecondary educational institutions such as universities, colleges and polytechnics.

Academic Librarians must have leadership abilities and be able to manage a diverse staff of professionals, para professionals, clerical and support staff. They need to have particularly strong

communication and interpersonal skills, the ability to work within a team environment, good technical proficiency, and an understanding of the complex issues facing libraries and higher education.

School Librarians

School Librarians manage, develop, and promote a library within a school to ensure that it provides effective resources and information source for the institution's pupils, students and staff. The school refers to elementary, junior, and higher schools.

Archivist

An Archivist is a professional who assesses, collects, organizes, preserves, supervises and provides access to information determined to have long-term value. Data maintained by an Archivist can be of any type of media including documents, electronic records, letters, photographs and videos; or sound recordings.

Bibliographer

Bibliographers are subject specialists, including subject-area and language specialists. They help develop library collections in line with the goals and objectives of the libraries.

They accomplish these tasks by making recommendations for purchase, by identifying special acquisition opportunities, and by interacting with donors.

Cataloguer

A Cataloguer, or Catalogue Librarian compiles information on library materials (books, monographs, serials, periodicals, other documents, and electronic resources) in bibliographic format and prepares cards or computer records to identify these materials and to integrate the information into a library catalogue so that staff and library users can locate and retrieve

the materials available in the library. Cataloguers verify author, title, and classmark on card and electronic catalogues.

Library Consultant

Library Consultants are Librarians who have developed their expertise by running or working in libraries, or individuals from outside the field of Librarianship who have specific knowledge relevant to libraries and information systems.

Library organizations might need a consultant when they have no expertise in a particular area, or when the time of need is considered short-term.

Library Consultants analyze administrative policies, observe work procedures, and review data relative to book, media and other collections to determine the effectiveness of the library services to its policy, conduct organizational studies and evaluation of design systems and procedures, conduct work measurement studies, and prepare manuals on operations and procedures to assist library management to function more efficiently and effectively.

Circulation/Inter Library Loan Librarian

The Circulation/Inter Library Loan Librarian manages all functions of the Circulation Department, interacting constantly with library users.

Library Director

The position of Library Director offers the largest range of duties in the library world. Library Directors have overall authority and responsibility for operations of the library.

They have the broad responsibility for administering and managing all the system-wide support areas of the library. The task includes administration, technology support, collection development, reference and reader services.

The specific roles of the Library Director include short and long-term planning, overseeing staff, coordinating budget preparation and presenting justifications for budget requests, monitoring expenditures, and interpreting library policies and procedures.

Chief Librarian

A Chief Librarian is a service-supervising Librarian who coordinates and manages the activities of a branch library or department and assists library users in selecting and locating books. They train and supervise library support staff in performing their duties.

Children's Librarian

Children's Librarians are responsible for children's programmes for public and school libraries. They confer with teachers, parents, and community groups to assist in developing programmes for the children.

Collection Development Librarian

The Collection Development Librarian is responsible for developing the library collections in line with the goals or objectives of the institution or organization.

Serial/Acquisition Librarian

Serial and Acquisition Librarians are responsible for all the steps involved in ordering and receiving materials (print and non-print) housed within the library or that are accessed electronically.

System Librarians

System Librarians have Computer Science or networking background and are mainly responsible for managing the electronic support activities of the library.

Media Librarian

Media Librarians plan, organize, and supervise the media resources of an academic, public, school, or special libraries.

Public Service Librarian

Public libraries are institutions created by legislation within the jurisdiction they serve. They receive funding from government.

Public Service Librarians work directly with the public. They specialize in one area of work such as circulation or reference. They assist library users in locating and obtaining materials, and instruct users in the use of library materials and technologies.

Reference Librarian

Reference Librarians analyze research requests of library users to determine needed information and assist in furnishing or locating information. They consult standard reference materials, including online databases and the Internet, to answer reference questions.

OTHER PROFESSIONALS

Financial Officer

Financial Officers in the library system are responsible for managing the financial risks and procedures of the business side of the library. They are responsible for financial planning and record keeping, and financial reporting to higher management.

Human Resource Officer

The Human Resource Officer working in a library serves as a crucial link between library staff and management. The primary goal of human resource management is to help an organization meet its strategic goals by attracting and maintaining employees

and managing them effectively. They plan, direct, and carry out policies relating to all phases of personnel activity.

Public Relations Officers

Public Relations Officers who work in the library promote community awareness of library service to stimulate public interest and usage of the library. They supervise the planning, development, and implementation of diversified programmes designed to inform and serve library users.

Other professionals who work in the library include Facility and Maintenance, Transport, and Security Officers.

Library Secretary

The Library Secretary is usually responsible for managing the library secretariat or administration. It involves planning and managing, meetings, correspondence, staff matters, travel arrangements, maintenance services, and all other administrative support services.

HOW TO BECOME A LIBRARIAN

To become a Librarian, Library Manager, Library Director or University Librarian, one needs a minimum of a Master's Degree in Librarianship or Information Science or Information Management from an accredited institution.

An MPhil or a PhD in Librarianship or Information Science or Information Management can also be pursued.

One also needs considerable work experience and skills to become a Library Manager or Director.

CRITERIA FOR APPOINTING AND PROMOTING ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS IN THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Librarians collaborate with faculty in the process of teaching, research and public service. The university libraries provide leadership in the access and use of knowledge and information through a variety of cooperation and reciprocal programmes with other academic communities. Academic Librarians, therefore, have faculty status and participate in teaching, research and public service by teaching and providing relevant and timely information and knowledge to augment the work of the faculty.

Libraries provide access to scholarly resources by acquiring, organizing, managing and preserving the collections; and through supportive reference and instruction services. Specialist Librarians in various aspects of library services address many challenges including integrating information resources into the intellectual life of the university, developing instruction programmes, teaching library users how to think critically about their information needs, obtaining support for implementing new information access technologies, operating multiple information systems simultaneously, training and retraining faculty and students.

Criteria for Appointing Librarians

The criteria for appointing Academic Librarians are designed to reflect the norms in academic librarianship and to provide motivation for the staff to achieve excellence in their profession.

The following constitute minimum requirements for initial appointment in most university libraries:

Assistant Librarian

- Earned a minimum of Master's degree in Librarianship or Information Science

- Evidence of potential ability in Librarianship, Scholarship (Research and Publications)/Creative Activities and Service
- Evidence of good character, mature attitude, and professional integrity
- Minimum of 2 years working experience

Senior Assistant Librarian

- Earned a minimum of Master's degree in Librarianship/Information Science
- At least 5 years appropriate professional experience in Librarianship
- Documented evidence of substantive accomplishments in Librarianship, Scholarship (Research and Publications), Creative Activities, and Service
- Evidence of good character, mature attitude, and professional integrity
- An additional graduate degree will be an advantage

Deputy Librarian/Librarian

- Earned minimum of Master's degree in Librarianship or Information Science
- At least 10 years appropriate professional experience in Librarianship
- Documented evidence of accomplishments in Librarianship, Scholarship (Research and Publications)/Creative Activities, and Service
- Documented evidence of sustained high quality professional productivity and national/international recognition in Librarianship or related area
- Evidence of good character, mature attitude, professional integrity, and a high degree of academic maturity and responsibility
- An additional graduate degree will be an advantage

NB: The Librarian position is equivalent to a Professor and is not a reward for long service; rather, it is recognition of superior

achievement within the discipline with every expectation of continuing contribution to the university and the larger academic community.

Criteria for Promoting Librarians

The criteria for promoting Librarians in the university system include the following: Librarianship, Scholarship (Research and Publications), Creative Activities, and Service.

Librarianship

Librarianship is central to the purpose and objectives of the university, and is to be evaluated, rewarded and encouraged in ways parallel to those for scholarship/creative activities, and service.

Effective professional librarianship may include, but not limited to, outstanding performance in the main area of responsibility. Participating in total library activities such as seminars and service on committees, enrolling in profession-related continuing education including advanced degree programmes, maintaining current awareness by reading professional literature and attending meetings and workshops, and creating outstanding or substantial aids to research.

The effective professional Librarian shows initiative, accepts responsibility, and contributes to planning and decision-making capability, fairness in instruction and supervision of others; besides responsible delegation of authority and independent judgement and initiative when appropriate.

Scholarship (Research and Publications)/Creative Activities

Academic Librarians are expected to constructively contribute to the field of librarianship and their areas of specialization through scholarship(research and publications)/creative activities. Evidence of such contributions includes the production of scholarly and professional articles and books; giving lectures and presenting papers; providing electronic and/

or multimedia resources; offering educational or analytical service for a scholarly journal or newsletter; coming up with innovations that constitute significant advancement of professional practice; securing grants; and/or performing original presentations. These activities properly encompass a variety of venues and publication types, and should focus primarily on refereed or reviewed work.

Service

Service encompasses activities of faculty members in the areas of professional service, institutional service, and outreach or public service.

Professional service takes the form of serving as an officer in professional organizations; participating in activities of committees, councils, accrediting bodies, or task forces; presenting tutorial lectures; acting as programme chair or discussant for professional meetings; holding membership in professional organizations; assisting with professional publications; or reviewing grant proposals.

Institutional service may include serving on departmental or university committees, councils, or boards; involvement in the governance of the university; or participating in university activities.

Outreach or public service covers work outside the university, including non-professional activities that directly support the goals and mission of the university.

WHAT LIBRARIANS DO

The Librarian administers libraries and performs related library services. The Librarian works in a variety of settings including public schools, colleges and university libraries, museums, corporations, government agencies, law firms, non-profit organizations, and health care providers.

The main tasks of Librarians may include selecting, acquiring, cataloguing, classifying, circulating, and maintaining library materials; and providing reference, bibliographic, and advisory services. They may perform in-depth strategic research and synthesize, analyze, edit, and evaluate information. They may also set up or work with databases and information systems.

Main Duties of Librarians

- Analyze information requests of users to determine the needed information, and assist in providing the information.
- Conduct searches of standard reference materials, including online sources and the Internet, to answer users' reference questions.
- Teach library users basic computer skills and information literacy.
- Explain the use of library facilities, resources, equipment, and services; and provide information about library policies.
- Develop library policies and procedures.
- Review and evaluate materials for selection and acquisition.
- Provide special reference services to support the information use.

Special Skills and Abilities Required of a Librarian

- Communication skills - Knowledge of media production, communication, and information dissemination techniques.
- Customer and personal service - Knowledge of principles and processes for providing customer and personal services; and customer needs assessment, quality assurance, and evaluation of customer satisfaction.
- Information retrieval and web page creation.
- Administration and management - Knowledge of business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resource modeling,

leadership techniques, production methods, and in coordination of people and resources.

- Knowledge of administrative and clerical procedures and systems such as word processing, managing files and records, stenography, transcription, and office procedures.
- Education and training - Knowledge of principles and methods for curriculum and training design, teaching and instruction for individuals and groups, and measurement of training effects.
- Establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationship - Developing constructive and cooperative working relationship with others and maintaining them over time.
- Interpreting the meaning of information for others - Translating or explaining what information means and how it can be used.

LIBRARIAN - HEAD OF INSTITUTION RELATIONSHIP

No library or information service exists for its own sake; each is part of a larger organization and its community. The Librarian within the institution (school, university, government agency, public library, corporation or non-profit organization) creates and provides excellent information services in many forms, using many methods. Their services include obtaining information directly for clients, organizing information sources for access, guiding clients in information search, and teaching information literary skills.

Many librarians do not report to librarians, and they know that the Library Director reports to someone who is not a librarian. The administrators who make decisions about funding and policies for libraries and information services may not understand what professional librarians contribute to the success of the organization.

Professional librarians have specialized expertise needed by every institution or organisation. Therefore, Librarians must communicate the value of libraries clearly to their organizations.

Every librarian has an ethical professional responsibility to provide that value to the organization and to promote it to society at large. The price of hiding the value of libraries from the leadership of organizations can result in loss of positions, closure of libraries, and deprivation of needed financial resources.

All library managers report to a higher authority, unless they own their own facility. Librarians also work and share experiences with peers in their own or other organizations and agencies. In public libraries, directors report to Library Board of Trustees or a City Council.

Academic Librarians usually report to the Vice Chancellor, President or Principal of the institutions. Information Specialists heading special libraries report to Departmental Heads or Directors, Managing Directors or Chief Executive Officers of the organization. Therefore, Librarians must recognize the fundamental management and leadership abilities of heads of institutions .

Librarians must ask and find answers to the following questions to help them know how to deal with their bosses:

1. Does the Head help the organization feel like a team?
2. Is the Head open to new ideas and adaptable to changes?
3. Does the Head enjoy and understand the role of librarians?
4. Are the decision-making skills of the Head participative, open, and flexible; or dictatorial and authoritative?
5. Does the Head shift management styles often, leaving others confused as to his or her style?
6. Is the Head accessible?

Answers to these questions would make it possible for library managers to deal effectively with their Heads of institutions to win their support.

LIBRARIANSHIP AS A PROFESSION

The Oxford English Dictionary defines profession as an occupation in which professional knowledge of some subject, field, or science is applied: a vocation or career, especially one that involves prolonged training and a formal qualification.

A Sociologist, Abbott (1988,1998), has researched and described the nature of occupations and professions including librarianship. All professions, including librarianship, share six common professional traits: professional association, formal education, a theoretical and practical body of knowledge, code of ethics for professional practice, service orientation, and community recognition.

Professional Association

The first common trait of all professions is the professional association, a representative occupational association concerned with general standards of professional activity (Winter, 1983).

Professional associations have mission statements, bye-laws and publications; and also officers who convene committee meetings. Librarians have formal associations such as Ghana Library Association (GLA) and America Library Association (ALA).

Formal Education

A profession requires established formal educational programmes affiliated with a university (Winter, 1983). Librarianship involves formal education at various levels.

Theoretical and Practical Body of Knowledge

Professionals see to "the creation and maintenance of a body of theoretical and practical knowledge – the mastery of which is a precondition of admission to professional status along with a core of scholars who regularly contribute to this body of knowledge"(Winter, 1983).

Code of Ethics

All professions have standards of ethical service in the practice of the profession, and librarianship is no exception. A code of ethics is developed to regulate the conduct of professional work.

Information service providers require not only knowledge and expertise, but also respect for the profession, clients, and society.

Service Orientation

Service orientation covers the provision of service to a specified group of persons (Winter, 1983).

The practice of any profession includes some type of diagnosis, treatment, inference, and academic knowledge (Abbott, 1988). In librarianship, these practices would include analysis of information needs as diagnosis; collection development, information organization, and information retrieval as treatment; the process of information service as inference; and professional education as academic knowledge. Doctors, Lawyers and Librarians give advice in practicing their respective professions, which forms a very important part of their service.

Social Recognition

A significant segment of employers of Librarians clearly recognize the professional status of Librarians.

Librarians, besides having a thorough knowledge of professional practice, must also clearly demonstrate the profession's most valuable features and effectively communicate its value.

CORE COMPETENCIES REQUIRED OF A LIBRARIAN

According to American Library Association (2009), the basic knowledge and understanding and core competencies that a professional Librarian should possess include the following:

Foundations of the Profession

- Ethical values and foundational principles of library and information profession.
- History of librarians and librarianship.
- History of human communication and its impact on libraries.
- Current types of libraries (national, academic, school, public, and special).

Information Resources

- Concepts and issues related to the life cycle of recorded knowledge and information, from creation through various stages of use and disposition.
- Concepts, issues and methods related to acquisition and disposition of resources, including evaluation, selection, purchasing, processing, storing, and weeding.
- Concepts and issues related to management of various collections.
- Concepts, issues and methods related to maintenance of collections, including preservation and conservation.

Organization of Knowledge and Information

- Principles involved in the organization and representation of recorded knowledge and information.
- System of cataloguing, metadata, indexing and classification; standards and methods used to organize recorded knowledge and information.

Technological Knowledge and Skills

- Information, communication, and related technologies as they affect the resources, services delivery, and uses of libraries and other information agencies.
- Principles and techniques necessary to identify and analyze emerging technologies and innovations to re-organize and implement relevant technological improvements.

Reference and User Services

- Concepts, principles and techniques of reference and user services that provide access to relevant and accurate recorded knowledge and information for individuals of all ages and groups.
- Techniques used to retrieve, evaluate, and determine the size of information from diverse sources for use by individuals of all ages and groups.
- Methods used to interact successfully with individuals of all ages and groups to provide consultation, mediation, and guidance in using recorded knowledge and information.
- Information literacy and information competence techniques and methods.
- Principles and methods of advocacy used to reach specific audiences to promote and explain concepts and services.

Research

- Fundamentals of quantitative and qualitative research methods.
- Principles and methods used to assess the actual and potential value of new research.
- Concept behind and methods for assessing and evaluating library services and their outcomes.

Administration and Management

- Principles of planning and budgeting in libraries and other information agencies.
- Principles of effective personnel practices and human resource development.
- Concepts behind and methods for assessing and evaluating library services and their outcomes.

LIBRARIES AND THEIR FUNCTIONS

LIBRARIES

The word 'Library' came from a Latin word 'Liber' meaning 'books'. It refers to a collection or group of collections of books and/or other materials organized and maintained for use (reading, consultation, study, research, etc.). By extension, the room, building or facility that houses such a collection usually, but not necessarily, built for that purpose (James, 2005).

Libraries are but one of a vast range of institutions that supply today's society with some sort of service. The particular kind of service they offer is access to large and organized stores of knowledge. The scope of the services they provide has been gradually developed over many years and still growing. In this age of information explosion, the services libraries offer are undeniably important (Whittaker, 1993).

Therefore, libraries are a collection of information sources, resources, and services that one organized and stored for reference purpose.

It is also important to emphasize that we now have virtual libraries that are not a physical place, but an electronic library that exists somewhere and provides access to the collections through the Internet.

TYPES OF LIBRARIES

Considerable differences exist between types of libraries as regards functions, services, and emphasis.

The four main types of libraries are national, academic, public, and special libraries.

National Libraries

A National library is established by government to serve the needs of government, often to function as a library of record for the nation's publishing output and, in some cases, to act as a central agency for library and bibliographic development in the nation.

National libraries serve as repository of a nation's culture and wisdom, and an intellectual stimulant. Some examples of national libraries are the USA Library of Congress and British National library.

Functions of national libraries

- To establish and manage the national information and bibliographic control centre.
- To provide consultancy and professional services to government and quasi government institutions.
- To promote national and international library cooperation, especially in the field of information exchange and resource sharing.
- To promote research and development activities into Librarianship.
- To promote the use of information technology in the provision of library services.
- To serve as depository for all publications issued in a nation and help implement copyright laws.
- To serve as focal point for the national information systems.

Academic Libraries

Academic libraries are found in universities, colleges, polytechnics, and schools.

Such libraries are established to support teaching, learning, and research in the academic institutions.

The Librarian's role in these libraries includes such varied positions and tasks as selecting materials in particular areas, serving as faculty and department liaisons and maintaining library web pages and online collections, working at reference desks, teaching bibliographic instruction, and cataloguing incoming materials.

Academic librarians with faculty status often meet similar tenure and promotion requirements as other faculties, resulting in the emphasis on research, publication, and community service besides their day-to-day duties.

Functions of academic libraries

- To acquire, organize, store, and disseminate information in various formats to support the university business of teaching, learning, research, and community service.
- To develop and provide materials, resources, and services to support the university community.
- To serve as repositories of knowledge and information generated by the academic institutions.
- To teach information literacy skills to faculty, students, and staff for effective search and use of information.
- To provide advisory services to users on sources and use of information.

Public Libraries

Public libraries serve communities of all sizes and are distinguished by being open to all; most people think of this when they picture libraries and librarians. Public libraries also employ people in various positions, with defined departments. One can choose a particular focus such as children's librarian, reference librarian, technical services librarian, system librarian, readers' services librarian, collection development librarian, cataloguing librarian, and subject librarian.

All public services have a user services problem, because they serve many different users with varied needs. They offer a wider range of services compared to any kind of library.

The public libraries are funded by the state and local authorities.

Functions of public libraries

Public libraries are important institutions with a vital role to play in establishing, nurturing, and nourishing people's love of reading. Public libraries also play a part in lifelong and informal learning.

Public libraries provide access to computers and the Internet for the general public.

In specific terms, public libraries perform the following functions:

- Support educational and cultural activities of groups and organizations.
- Serve as recreational place.
- Support self-education of individuals in the community.

Special or Corporate Libraries

Special libraries or information centres are found in corporations and other specialized organizations. Many special Librarians/Information Specialists now work with information outside the typical library settings, and have non-library job titles; examples are medical and law librarians.

Special libraries are difficult to define compared to other groups of libraries so far dealt with. Special libraries differ, depending on the objectives of the organization.

Other examples of special libraries are libraries of industrial firms, professional bodies, research organizations, societies, government departments and institutions.

Functions of special libraries

The functions of special libraries vary. However, the core operations are the same.

Under normal circumstances, special libraries acquire information resources, organize, store, and disseminate information to support the objectives of the parent organization.



LIBRARY MANAGEMENT

PUBLIC VERSUS TECHNICAL SERVICES

Libraries are not managed in the same way. Traditionally, the functions of libraries are divided into two main categories, public and technical services.

Public Services

The public services deal with tasks that are performed in direct contact with the public; and are usually executed by personnel at the circulation or information desk, or the reference desk where users are assisted with in-depth reference questions or research problems. Library users actually see and meet such personnel, and many users mistake them for Librarians.

Technical Services

Technical services refer to the other part of library services in which over half of library staff work in offices and areas behind the scenes, readying the library and its collections to serve the public.

Technical services can, therefore, be defined as library work that Technical Services Staff do behind the scenes without having much contact with library users. They include acquisitions, cataloguing, classification, physical processing of materials, mending and repairs, gift and exchange, preservation, organization of government documents, and serials control.

Most library users are unaware that the collections in a library are acquired and organized before putting them on the shelves. In specific terms, technical services include ordering, claiming

and receipt of materials, binding, database and catalogue management.

HOW LIBRARIES ARE MANAGED IN RECENT TIMES

Library management varies, depending on the size and type of library.

In recent times, library functions are managed under the following: library administration or secretariat, collection development, reference services, cataloguing, circulation and reader services, and electronic support services.

Library Administration

Library administration refers to the control and supervision of a library or library system. It includes planning, budgeting, reporting, policy making, personnel management, public relations, and programmes assessment, with responsibility for results.

It also refers collectively to persons responsible for managing a library, usually Board of Directors and Library Directors.

The specific functions of library administration or secretariat include the following:

- Staffing
- Budgeting
- Representation at meetings
- Support services
- Monitoring and evaluations
- Communicating
- Reporting

The management of a modern library or learning resource centre should be based on a clear understanding of the needs of its users, and staff should include regular evaluations.

The support of the institution's decision-makers is absolutely critical, and it is necessary for the head of the library to be part of the institution's leadership.

The library must be an integral part of the institution's corporate and information communications strategy, and fundamental to the academic programmes offered at the institution if it is an academic library.

Collection Development

Collection development is the process of planning and building a useful and balanced collection of library materials over a period, based on an ongoing assessment of the information needs of library users, analysis of usage statistics and demographic projections, normally constrained by budgetary limitations.

Collection development includes the formulation of a policy, selection criteria, planning for resource sharing and replacement of lost and damaged items, stock revision, weeding, and routine selection decisions.

Library staff, who are supervised by either a collection development librarian or an acquisition librarian, receive requests from selectors (e.g. lecturers, students and others) that are processed. Books and materials are ordered from vendors, publishers, bookshops and suchlike. The books and materials are checked and received, and invoices are forwarded to accounts department for payment.

In an electronic environment, libraries subscribe to electronic information resources in the form of e-journals and books. Sometimes it is handled at the electronic support department headed by system librarians.

Knowing how to evaluate the needs of the library and how to

change materials appropriately are important if one is responsible for making decisions about what materials are appropriate for the library.

The job of the Librarian is to ensure that the collections meet the needs of the individuals they serve, and that money is used in the best way possible.

Circulation and Reader Services

Circulation and reader services involve admitting library users into the library, circulating library materials (i.e. issue, return and renewal of borrowed materials), answering general enquiries, reservation, and enforcing library rules and regulations.

Reader Service Librarians assist library users with general enquiries, including guiding users in the arrangement of the library and use of the library catalogue, and bookings for the use of study rooms.

Reader services also include shelf management, registration of new users, and user education.

Cataloguing

A library catalogue is a register or database of all bibliographic items (books/materials) found in a library.

Therefore, cataloguing is the process by which librarians create and maintain the database of books/materials (catalogue).

Cataloguers are responsible for cataloguing and classification of incoming books and materials.

As an intellectual exercise, cataloguing requires some level-headedness. It is normally executed based on the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules. For classification, the main

classification schemes used are, Library of Congress, Universal Decimal Classification or Dewey suitable for the books/ materials and objectives of the library. The cataloguing process also involves the use of subject heading list and Thesaurus to determine the subject matter of the book or material.

In recent times, cataloguing has been computerized, making the process easier and faster.

Labelling, binding, indexing, and abstracting are also handled by the cataloguing section or department of a library.

Reference Services

Reference service refers to the assistance library staff give to users in search of in-depth information within and outside the library. Variety of services are provided to help users, including providing information services on demand and in anticipation, providing instruction in using the library, selecting documents and organizing reference materials.

Reference Librarians provide library users with direction to library materials, advise on library collections and services, and provide expertise on how to search the multiple sources of information.

Librarians are experts in the contents and arrangement of their collections, as well as how information is organized in the library. Therefore, library users consult the staff of the reference desk to help in finding information. Using structured reference interview, the Librarian works with the library users to clarify their needs and determine what information resources would meet their needs. Some specialized services that the reference service section provides include the following:

- Current Awareness Service (CAS)
- Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)
- Questions and Answers Service (QAS)

- Referral services
- Inter-library loan

Current awareness service

Current Awareness Service (CAS) provides updates on topical issues and latest publications for library users. Library users need to be kept up to date. They want to read and know the latest news, books/materials that are available.

Selective dissemination of information

Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) is based on the concept of personal service. The SDI is a highly personalized service directed to individuals to cater for their individual information needs. The basic concept behind SDI consists of matching retrieved information (document) with the profile of each individual clientele. The profile can be a single user, or a group working on the same project or some limited subject fields.

The items that match are brought to the attention of the users. The aim is to ensure that the users do not miss information essential to them (Kumar, 2007).

Questions and answers service

Questions and Answers Service (QAS) refers to the service in which libraries of all kinds respond to questions asked by users. The answers to these questions are provided from reference sourced such as bibliographies.

Referral services

With referral services, users are referred to other libraries, experts, institutions, or organizations for their information needs to be met.

Inter-library loan

The inter-library loan service refers to the situation in which

libraries undertake to borrow materials from other partner libraries for their users.

Electronic Support Services

One of the new functions of libraries in recent times is providing electronic support services as a result of the introduction of information communication technologies in library management.

The introduction of computers, photocopiers, scanners, self-issuing machines, the Internet, online databases and others has made it necessary for libraries to establish electronic support sections, units, centres, or departments with system librarians overseeing the operations of this function of libraries.

System librarians help to manage online library services, including network administration, library websites, photocopy and Internet services, as well as library management applications.

The electronic support section is responsible for planning and executing library automation projects.

Library automation started with the computerization of library catalogues, moving through the development of circulation systems to that of integrated library systems. These integrated systems use a single software architecture to manage the core processes of libraries, including cataloguing, circulation, acquisitions, inter-library loan, and financial control with varying degrees.

LIBRARY REPORTS

According to Marchionini & Maurer (1995), a modern library is an organized set of resources, which includes human resources and the spectrum of media such as text, video, hypermedia and computers. Libraries have physical components such as space,

equipment, online connections, collections, and media.

A librarian engages in many activities that are not sufficiently known by users or the parent organization. Hence, it is in the Librarian's interest to write reports describing all aspects of library work.

Usefulness of Reports

The reports serve several purposes:

- They form the basis for managing the library professionally. As such they are also indispensable to the Librarian.
- They are a source of information for library patrons, publicizing operations and fostering general understanding of a library's complex and time-consuming activities. Consequently, users willingly pay for certain services, and also show greater appreciation of all aspects of library work.
- Reports are simply necessary when it comes to convincing parent organizations that the library works efficiently and cost-effectively.
- Library reports help to form the basic argument when applying for funding for a new service. In times of budget cuts, libraries are especially vulnerable.

A library's activities can be described professionally only by collecting correct and enough data.

According to Menzul (1983), a mere reporting without meaningful analysis and interpretation relative to the served populations would have little value in helping to bring the message across to management. Yet, all too often library staff are not really familiar with statistical procedures for collecting, analysing, and interpreting data.

Therefore, the ultimate goal of collecting library data is to have at one's disposal useful information about the past and present activities to prepare for future ones. The data in streamlined

form and resolutions based on them will also be described in reports useful for several categories of people as follows:

■ ***Head Librarian***

Certainly, the head librarian makes management decisions based on these reports.

■ ***Library Staff***

The reports give library staff a global view of all library activities and an understanding of the reason why they have to collect data daily.

■ ***Library Users***

Informing library users about the library's activities makes them aware of the reasons why certain rules and limitations are necessary, and why certain services are not free of charge.

- Making reports public to library patrons and staff is a good way to give them a sense of involvement, and to solicit new initiatives and constructive criticisms.
- Finally, **financing bodies and parent organizations** should be informed regularly.

Library reports are presented in annual reports, newsletters, bulletins, or technical reports.

DATA GATHERING IN AN ELECTRONIC ENVIRONMENT

In recent years, the number of electronic activities has increased drastically. Usually this also means data are gathered in an electronic way by using the Open Public Access Catalogues (OPAC) or the web-oriented library activities.

LIBRARY NETWORKS/PROFESSIONAL BODIES

Libraries should not exist in isolation. It is, therefore, very important for libraries to cooperate at various levels at home

and abroad to share their limited information resources.

Therefore, Library Managers, Directors or University Librarians should be encouraged to join library networks at home and abroad. Professional Librarians should also be encouraged to join professional library networks and associations.

Some notable library networks and associations that accept institutional and individual membership include Ghana Library Association (GLA), Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Ghana (CARLIGH), West African Library Association (WALA), Commonwealth Library Association (COMLA), Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) UK, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), America Library Association (ALA), International Association of School Librarianship (IASL), Association of Christian Librarians (ACL), International Association of Law Librarians (IALL), International Association of Agricultural Information Specialists (IAALD), Health Information and Libraries in Africa (AHILA), Library and Information Association of South Africa (LIASA), Special Libraries Association (SLA), International Association of Scientific and Technological University Libraries (IATUL), International Association of Music Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres (IAML), and International Association of Marine Science Libraries and Information Centres (IAMSLIC).

Role of Professional Organisations

The role these professional organizations play include:

- communication with members on major developments in the field of librarianship;
- represent the professionals;
- establish and promote standards in the profession;
- provide and promote continuous professional education and development;
- job placement for members;

- promote research into librarianship; and
- support participation in conferences, workshops, and seminars.

5

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF LIBRARIES

It is well established by all standards that Librarians at the various levels of management are managers of physical, financial, and human resources.

Managers make use of the functions of management in performing their duties, namely planning, organizing, directing, staffing, coordination, reporting, budgeting, representation, communication, and evaluation. A manager must show good leadership qualities to succeed.

Libraries of all kinds are comprised of buildings, furniture, fittings, large volumes of books/materials, computing facilities, office equipment, and human resources. Therefore, Library Directors or University Librarians have a responsibility as managers to manage these financial, physical and human resources successfully to achieve the goals of the organization.

The level of responsibility from senior management of libraries varies from library to library, depending on the size of the library. However, professional Librarians serve as managers at various levels of library management.

As lower-level managers, professional Librarians are responsible for the day-to-day routine operations of the various sections of the library such as Acquisitions, Reference, Electronic Support, Circulation and Reader services.

The heads of department, college/institutional librarians, branch managers, and associate/deputy directors serve as the middle-

level managers in the library, while the Library Directors or University Librarians, Library Boards or Trustees are the senior-level managers who have ultimate responsibility for managing libraries.

The Library Directors or University Librarians have to combine their responsibilities as senior managers with the technical responsibilities of supervising the core functions of libraries, namely collection development, circulation and reader services, reference service, and electronic support service.

Senior-level management are expected to formulate a strategy with clear vision, mission, goals and objectives, as well as action plans for achieving the goals; and explicitly recognize competition and impact of outside environmental forces. In executing such tasks, they must involve the middle and lower-level managers.

Strategic planning is started by senior management who require all units to submit plans for the overall purpose of developing institution-wide planning cycles. Library directors who understand that the system of planning is limited to strategic allocation of resources are more likely to ensure that the mission and goals of the library are closely aligned with those of the university.

Therefore, the strategic planning process should describe the library's actions, future direction, performance targets, and approaches to be adopted to achieve the targets. The models or approaches are many.

STRATEGIC PLANNING MODEL

The following seven-step strategic planning model is recommended for the strategic management of libraries:

- develop vision, mission and value
- develop objectives

- analyze the external environment
- determine the competitive position
- identify the competitive advantage
- determine the methods for accomplishing the objectives
- evaluate performance (Belcourt & McBey, 2007)

Develop Vision, Mission and Value for the Library

A vision is a long-term, perhaps unrealizable goal. It is a clear and compelling goal that serves to unite an organization's effort. A vision must challenge and stretch the organization.

The vision of libraries should be in line with the corporate vision of the parent organization. Libraries should also develop a mission statement.

A mission statement articulates a view of realistic, credible and attractive future for the organization. It has been defined as the purpose for which, or reason why, an organization exists.

Some have said that the distinction between a vision statement and a mission statement is that the vision statement answers the question, "Where are we going?"; whereas the mission statement answers the question, "Who are we"? (Belcourt & McBey, 2007).

Develop Objectives

The second most important thing for the management of libraries to do is to develop objectives to achieve the strategy. Objectives are expressions, in measurable terms, of what an organization intends to achieve.

Goals can be classified as hard or soft. Hard goals always include numbers, usually relative to performance last year or to competition.

Soft goals may include the act of being ethical and environmentally responsible, and providing a working environment free of discrimination with opportunities for professional development.

Analyze the External Environment

Library directors must be aware of the weaknesses, threats, and opportunities in the external environment. By scanning and monitoring technology, laws and regulations, the economy, socio-cultural factors and changing demographics, library directors can make reactive and proactive changes to the strategic plan. The SWOT analysis is a good tool for analyzing the library's resource capabilities and deficiencies.

Determine the Competitive Position

The senior management of libraries should determine who the customers (users) are and their characteristics, where they are, and what products or services they want (information needs).

Porter (1985) made a major contribution to the field of strategic management by grouping the many ways in which organizations can compete into five generic competitive strategies.

1. *Low-cost provider strategy*
The goal here is to provide a product or service at a price lower than that of competitors, while appealing to a broad range of customers. Libraries competing on such basis search continually for ways in which to reduce costs of their products and services.
2. *Broad differentiation strategy*
An organization using this strategy seeks to differentiate its products and services from those of competitors in ways

that appeal to a broad range of customers.

A library using the strategy searches for qualities that make its products or services different from those of competitors, and that encourage customers to pay a premium for them.

3. *Best cost provider strategy*

The goal here is to give customers (users) more value for their money by emphasizing low-cost products or services and an upscale differentiation. The products and services are offered at low cost.

4. *Focused or market niche strategy based on lower cost*

Low-cost products and services are offered to a select group of customers. Libraries competing this way should focus accordingly on a particular select group of users.

5. *Focused or market niche strategy based on differentiation*

Here, the organization tries to offer a niche product or service customized to the tastes and requirements of a very narrow market segment. Libraries should categorize their users and provide products and services that meet individual needs.

Under Porter's (1985) schema, business strategy concerns itself with the product and market scope, the particular goods and services to be provided, and the distinguishing features or attractive attributes that characterize the products and services. Typical product characteristics include cost, quality, optional features, durability, and reliability. Market dimensions refer to the characteristics of the target market—size, diversity, and service patterns. Libraries basically provide products and services, and should use the Porter's strategy in their strategic management.

Identify the Competitive Advantage

What does the organization have that gives it a competitive advantage?

Competitive advantage can be defined as those characteristics of a firm that enable it to earn higher rates of profits than its competitors. These are normally derived from the resources of the organization, which can be grouped in three ways:

1. ***Tangible assets***

These are the easiest to value and the only ones that appear on a company's balance sheet. They include land, raw materials, location, and cash.

2. ***Intangible assets***

These assets are not consumed, and may even grow in value. They include company reputation, brands, and patents.

3. ***Capabilities***

These are a complex combination of people and processes that represent the firm's capacity to display resources that have been purposely integrated to achieve a desired end state. Examples are managerial abilities, employees with specialized skills, ability to innovate, and organizational cultures.

Determine the Methods for Accomplishing the Objectives

If the goal is growth of the library, what are the techniques for achieving it? Should the library expand or consolidate the existing structure?

Evaluate Performance

Developing a strategy is easy; making it happen is not. The ability to execute a strategy is becoming a more

important criterion for assessing not only managers, but also the whole organization. The successful implementation of a strategy is judged by the ability to meet financial targets.

The library can be evaluated through indicators such as customer satisfaction or employee engagement.

The benefits of strategic management to libraries are as follows:

1. *Clarity*
It helps libraries to focus and guide decision-making about resource allocations.
2. *Coordination*
Everyone works toward the same goals.
3. *Efficiency*
Daily decision-making is guided toward the question, "Does it fit our strategy"?
4. *Incentives*
Employees understand the behaviours and performance that will be rewarded.
5. *Change*
If a major change is being considered, then understanding the current strategy is essential.
6. *Career development*
A clear outline of an organization's strategy helps one to decide on the possibility of working for the company; to determine if there is a skills fit, and what training and development one needs to facilitate the achievement of the strategy.

In conclusion, it is important that senior management of libraries appreciate the role of strategic planning in the success of their organizations, and also understand the language and

terminology of strategic planning. A strategy is a planned process whereby organizations can map out a set of objectives and methods of meeting those objectives.

Librarians occupying positions at various levels of management are expected to live up to expectations as managers. They have responsibility, just like many other managers working in other institutions or organizations, for ensuring that their respective establishments are run smoothly.

Librarians manage physical, financial, and human resources. Infact, they are sometimes referred to as "Information and Knowledge Managers".

They are, therefore, urged to use the necessary management functions, namely planning, organizing, directing, staffing, coordinating, reporting, budgeting, representation, communication and evaluation. Above all, librarians should show good managerial qualities to succeed as managers of physical, financial and human resources; and also use strategic planning models in managing libraries.

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until we first have good Librarians, properly educated,
professionally recognised and fairly rewarded*

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