

## Management Treatise

This Management Treatise is a reflection that encompasses a comprehensive and personal assessment of the LIS 650 Library Management Course.

### I. Personal Leadership and Professional Model

#### Leadership Mission and Values

Through the course readings, assignments, and discussions, I have come to adopt the following as my leadership mission statement:

I will strive to be a positive influence in a school media program to promote the love of learning, the acquisition of knowledge, and the joy of reading.

I believe my personal values of a strong work ethic, a genuine respect for others, and sincere dedication will assist me in achieving this personal objective.

As gatekeepers to the information world, school media coordinators have a large responsibility in providing access to information. The role of the information gatekeeper aligns the school media coordinator with a position of leadership within the school setting. Though this leadership is often subtle, as a school media coordinator, I will need to lead through example, through integrity, and through

commitment. In order to lead through example, integrity, and commitment, I must have a strong work ethic in which others will see. A strong work ethic will reveal a worthy example to be followed that incorporates integrity and commitment.

In addition to a strong work ethic, a genuine respect for others is paramount. In order to be effective, regardless of any leadership status, a genuine respect for others assures me of good working relationships with staff members as well as effective people skills when working with and relating to students. Without exemplifying respect to others, I will not have the opportunity to get to know the staff or students which affects my ability to have opportunities to meet staff or students' needs. In addition, establishing a relationship with staff members and students alike that is based on respect has return on investment. Staff members and students will in turn respect me, my position, my recommendations, and my expertise. With this, I can achieve my personal mission of being a positive influence to promote the love of learning, the acquisition of knowledge, and the joy of reading.

Of all the values I have or could have, a sincere dedication to what I do is perhaps the most important. When I selected my interviewee for the library manager interview, I selected my personal role model. What drew me to her was her passion and dedication to her work. In the interview, the best advice given to me was "remember what you are here for" (Crone, 2011). In order to carry out the mission set in front of me to positively influence the love of learning, the acquisition

of knowledge, and the joy of reading, I must be dedicated to what I am doing in managing a school media program. I must be dedicated to assisting teachers in whatever means I can to aid in students learning and acquiring knowledge. I must be dedicated to providing information and materials of value and interest to students in order to influence the joy of reading and learning positively. I must be dedicated to being the best at what I do.

## Talents and Personal/Professional Development Plan

### Talents

A review of Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman's *First, Break all the Rules* revealed that I possess the following talents:

Striving Talents – achiever, desire, competence, belief, mission, and ethics

Thinking Talents – focus, discipline, arranger, work orientation, gestalt, and responsibility

Relating Talents – empathy, interpersonal, developer, persuasion, command, and activator (pg. 251-252).

These talents work well together to make overseeing a school media program very successful. The striving talents of achieving, competence and mission work hand-in-hand with the thinking talents of focus, discipline, order and accuracy (gestalt). Combined the striving and thinking talents will be a strength in being able to accomplish the many tasks involved in the running of a school media program

single-handedly. The relating talents of wanting to capitalize upon relationships (interpersonal) and invest in others (developer) will help me work with students and teachers to utilize the library and its services for their benefit.

### Personal/Professional Development Plan

Upon completion of my MLIS, I expect to begin work as a school media coordinator in the immediate area. I expect that I will have little if any personnel to supervise but that I will be expected to manage an entire school media program. Leadership will take place in the form of orchestrating a media program that brings the most benefit to the school (its staff and students) at which I am employed. Managing a school media program will take various skills in such areas as budgeting, time management, collection development, and collaboration. The first few years will be spent learning the best and most advantageous manners in which to facilitate the school media program. This is a time in which I will utilize the tools I have received in my MLIS studies.

In 3 to 5 years, my expectation is to still be a school media coordinator. While the idea of lateral moving seems potentially possible, I do not foresee any ladder climbing to such positions as district or county school library director. I feel my calling is in being a school media coordinator and as such, I want to become the best at that. Following the principles of focusing on strengths and finding the right

fit as described in *First, Break all the Rules*, I believe this will be a time in which I will spend advancing my personal knowledge of the field through continued education and training (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999, pg. 141-214). As technology continues to change, the need for my own personal skills to reflect such changes will be important if I am to promote my personal mission and objectives. I cannot encourage continued acquisition of knowledge if I myself have not pursued continued education or advanced my technological proficiency. Likewise, I cannot promote the joy of reading if I am not reading material that I can further recommend to others to read.

In 15 years, I expect to have seen many changes in the field of library science in the realm of a school media coordinator. Just as past generations in the school media program have watched as changes have occurred, I believe the current and future generations will continually see changes as well. Technology, for example, continues to grow and advance us to unknown and uncharted territory. In the next 15 years, I expect to continue to learn and develop my skills along whatever path technology takes us in order to pass that knowledge on to students and teachers alike. Creativity and open-mindedness will play a large role in my position in order to stay in a position of value in the overall primary and secondary school arena.

Likewise, our educational system has continued to make advancements and adjustments to programs and curricular requirements that have resulted in changing how school media programs need to function. An example is that current needs and

expectations in education are finding school media specialists changing their role from the previously held position of the keeper of a “book warehouse” to that of “literacy consultants” (Buzzeo, 2007, pg. 18). This changing trend will only continue in the years to come as school librarians work to keep pace with the information, technology, and literacy needs of the future.

## Professional Cover Letter and Resume

The professional cover letter and resume are attached.

## II. Top Five Questions

My 5 questions:

### 1. What do I remember about management theory/practices?

Management is something one does. One manages people, resources, time, money, and so on. How one manages is a skill. Unfortunately, it has been a long time since I was an undergraduate student. Also, unfortunately, I did not pursue a career in which the skills I gained through my undergraduate studies were put to use. Therefore, I regret to say that I do not remember much about management theory or practices from that time in my life.

However, through the readings of this course, I feel I must have picked up the philosophies discussed in *First, Break all the Rules* as traditional theory or conventional wisdom either through my prior studies or through like itself. Many of the traditional views discussed by Buckingham and Coffman were views in which I held. While there were many I discovered I believed through the course of reading this text, one good example is the "corporate ladder climbing" for proof of success (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999, pg. 177-178). Whether I was taught or just assumed it to be the management philosophy for success that one must move up the corporate ladder in managerial positions, I cannot say. Yet, I would believe this, and many other traditional theories mentioned by Buckingham and Coffman, is what I remember about management from the past.

2. What has changed about management theory/practices in the last 20 years?

Because I do not remember much from my undergraduate studies in business management, I cannot presume to address what has changed in the last 20 years. Having said that, however, all things must change in order to adapt and thus maintain a level of currency and relevance. Therefore, management theories and practices must have changed in the last 20 years since my undergraduate days.

In their article, "The Relevant Past: Why the History of Management Should Be Critical for Our Future," Stephen Cummings and Todd Bridgman (2011), discuss the

contributions to management theory made by Max Weber in the area of bureaucracy and organization theory (pg.86). Weber believed "bureaucracy was the one best way to efficiently organize work" (Cummings & Bridgman, 2011, pg. 86). In more recent perspective, Weber is viewed as an "organization theorist who advocated a universal view and an authoritarian style of management" where he failed to foresee that employees would have "participation in decision making" (Cummings & Bridgman, 2011, pg. 86).

From the perspectives presented by Buckingham and Coffman as well as those of Cummings and Bridgman, it would appear that management theory has changed significantly in the last 20 years. This change seems to have resulted in a shift from an authoritarian style of management that controls employees and decisions to more of an authoritative style of management where the manager is more involved with the guiding and directing of employees through their participation.

3. How does management theory/practice fit into a library setting, especially a school library setting?

Based on what I have learned through this course, the school library setting is an ideal place for management theory and practice. However, through the entire course of study thus far, it has become more evident that a school library setting does not necessarily involve employee supervision. Guilford County Schools have



limited media assistants. In 2007-2008, Guilford County Schools reported employing 116 media specialists and 49 media assistants (GCS Media Dept. Statistics) across their 121 schools (GCS Welcome).

Management theory and practice in the school library setting is geared toward managing a program more so than managing employees. Given that, the skills needed for management in a school media program will be more organizational and function-based. Management practices, such as time management and budgeting, will be more heavily utilized.

4. How do management theories and practices apply if you, the manager, are the only employee in the library?

From the perspective that management is about employee supervision, there is little if any room for such practices in the school library when you are most likely the only employee. As mentioned before, current trends in the immediate geographical area do not support assistants in school libraries. Therefore, supervisory or personnel management practices are not applicable.

However, as the only employee in the school library, the management practices that come into use are those of organizational management. Such practices as time management, budgeting, and resource management are crucial to the success of

the school media program. The responsibility of overseeing an entire school media program single-handedly will take significant management skills.

5. What components of the manager's role will be most important to my success in a school library?

The ability to manage multiple facets of a school media program simultaneously will be most important to my success in a school library. Buckingham and Coffman (1999) made a clear distinction between management and leadership (pg. 63). They define managers as ones who focus inside the organization, inside the people to what motivation is needed to accomplish a task (pg. 63). Their definition of leadership is one of focus outward toward long-term goals and strategies (pg. 63). However, Dianne C. Dees et al. (2007) in "Today's School Library Media Specialist Leader" defines leadership as "the ability to influence or inspire others to achieve shared goals" (pg. 11).

Based on the definitions provided by Buckingham and Coffman (1999) and Dees et al. (2007), the components of the manager's role that will be most important to my success in a school library will be operationally based. Components of the manager's role such as time management and budgeting rather than personnel management skills such as motivating employees to perform will be needed.

Although my question did not consider leadership, leadership will play a significant role in my success in a school media program. Dees et al. (2007) continues in her article to address the key role the media specialist plays in being a leader in the areas of technology, reading, and curriculum as well as in leading through mentoring and participation in professional organizations. "There are many leadership opportunities and roles for library media specialists, and many innovative methods of helping our students learn. As long as students attend school and teachers teach, media specialists will have a leadership role in making sure curriculum needs are addressed and media centers are places of learning" (Dees et al., 2007, pg. 14).

### III. Course Student Learning Outcomes

#### 1. Advanced Communication Skills – Verbal, Written, Listening, Presentation, Discussion, Conflict Resolution

Due to the nature of this course being online, advanced communication skills became a quick and compelling component. Through advanced technology such as Skype and Google Docs, my teammates and I were able to communicate. Again, through advanced technology such as YouTube, I was able to present information to classmates without a face-to-face interaction. Without the online format, I am not

sure I would have selected to use such advanced forms of communication personally.

2. Organizational and Personnel Management Skills - Strategic Planning, Policies (Establishing and Refining), Budgeting, Meetings, Personnel Management, Resource Allocation & Management, Hiring and Firing, Diversity of Thought and Values, Research & Development, Needs Assessment

All of these components of management were discussed. Team activities, although limited due to the discussion format online in Blackboard, made working with the components more visual and applicable. Unfortunately, the length of the course afforded only time for an overview rather than an in-depth exploration of these management skills. Most of what was covered centered around personnel management as we repeatedly discussed the 12 questions from *First, Break all the Rules*.

Of all these components, the needs assessment was probably the most memorable. This is perhaps due to the amount of time and energy spent on this one area and assignment. I feel the assignment was a highly valuable learning experience. My group chose a public institution. There was conflict within the staff at this location that provided a forum for personal reflection into how I might resolve the conflict if I were in the situation. Delving into the organization was very

insightful. I think it would also be good to do consider approaching this assignment by selecting team members who are in the same study path, for me, school media, to see how a needs assessment actually benefits the specific program or institution, school media program.

3. Relationship Management, Professional Development, and Teamwork Skills - Lateral Leadership, Self-Regulation and Self-Awareness, Group Development, Conflict Resolution, Resonant Leadership, Evaluations, Professional Development Plan, Revised Resume

All of these components were addressed during the course. However, there were limited means of exploring and developing skills in the area of conflict resolution within team work. As a team, our primary objective was not to bond or resolve conflict per se, but to complete assignments. While minor conflict did arise, there were little means to actually address resolution. As with Organizational and Personnel Management Skills (SLO 2), there was not adequate time in the course to do more than an overview of the skills within this learning objective.

The assignments and readings provided many opportunities for self-awareness. I feel I have a much clearer perception of the type of person I am and want to be. I have an ideal to strive for established through the principles in *Raving Fans*. I have more definition into my talents to assist me in assessing my strengths and

weaknesses in future positions established through *First, Break all the Rules*. I also have a better understanding of my emotional state and how it affects my ability to perform as well as lead through the concepts in *Primal Leadership*.

#### 4. Knowledge of Leadership and Management Theory - Leadership styles, Leadership and Management Theory, Leadership and Management Research, Case Studies

Leadership styles were discussed throughout the text, *Primal Leadership*. There were activities that provided reflective self-evaluation of leadership styles and management philosophy. Our own manager interview provided personal exploration into the case study component. Likewise, Dr. Chow's interviews with library managers in different types of libraries gave a more realistic and current case study.

#### IV. Final Thoughts

This was a fundamental course. I feel there was a great deal of material that was covered. Looking back through the course, my own view of management has changed. I am more aware of the different styles of leadership. I also am more aware of my own emotional state and how it affects how I lead. Although Buckingham and Coffman (1999) made a point of distinguishing management from leadership (pg. 63), Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2002) discuss leadership, no matter what form or level of

leadership one is in, from the way in which leading is done (pg. 3). Whether I view myself as a manager or a leader is not as important as how in which I manage or lead. As a future school librarian/media coordinator, I will manage a program. Through that role as manager, I will oversee the operation of a school media program: its collection development, its technological advancement, its ability to assist in the teaching of the curriculum. As a future school librarian/media coordinator, I will also lead in many ways, as a leader of technology, of reading promotion, of literacy collaboration, and of curriculum support. The skills and information I received through this class will help me be better at both.

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