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The Impact of Leadership Development on the Organizational Culture of a Canadian Academic Library

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Abstract

Objective – To determine the perceived impact of leadership development on the behaviours and competencies of employees and the organizational culture of the University Library, University of Saskatchewan, Canada.

Methods – Using grounded theory methodology, the study was conducted in an academic library serving a mid-sized medical-doctoral university in western Canada. Twenty-one librarians and support staff who had completed the University Library’s Library Leadership Development Program (LLDP) participated in one-on-one interviews of 40-60 minutes duration. Interview transcripts were prepared by the researcher and reviewed by the participants. After editing, those source documents were analyzed to reveal patterns and common threads in the responses. The coding scheme that best fits the data includes the following four headings: skill development, learning opportunities, strategic change management, and shared understanding of organizational vision and values.

Results – According to the responses in interviews given by graduates of the Library Leadership Development Program, the library’s investment in learning has created a cohort of employees who are: self-aware and engaged, committed to learning and able to develop new skills, appreciative of change and accepting of challenges, or accountable and committed to achieving the organization’s vision and values.

Conclusion – Competencies and behaviours developed through exposure to leadership development learning opportunities are changing the nature of the organization’s culture to be more collaborative, flexible, open and accepting of change and challenge, supportive of learning, able to create and use knowledge, and focussed on achieving the organization’s vision and values. These are the characteristics commonly associated with a learning organization.

Introduction

Academic libraries operate in complex and continuously changing information environments as members of the library community and their parent academic institutions. Often, large organizations have a conservative culture and may be rigid in their hierarchical structure: traits that do not promote flexibility in responding to shifting environmental conditions. However, libraries can leverage the actions of their most influential and important resource, their employees, to loosen the organizational culture. The University Library at the University of Saskatchewan has found that a well-designed and effectively delivered leadership development program empowers employees to learn new skills to develop behaviours that allow them to respond positively to change, to accept challenges in their daily lives, and to become flexible enough to solve problems and create knowledge.

In this project, graduates of an in-house leadership development program were asked to consider the value of the learning opportunity and whether they perceived changes in their own behaviours and that of their colleagues that were reflected in changes to the organizational culture. A significant investment by library administration over time has been channelled into the leadership program and, although surveys gathered information about the effectiveness of the program, there was no investigation of the impact of employees’ leadership behaviours on themselves, their colleagues, and the organizational culture. The research presented here supplies evidence that

the organizational culture has changed as employees have developed and applied their leadership skills.

With the arrival of a new Library dean in 2006, the University Library at the University of Saskatchewan committed to developing its employees as leaders and innovators. The vision, as described in the University Library’s Strategic Plan (2013b), is supported by several initiatives that are designed to transform library collections, facilities, services, and the organizational culture. As expressed by the dean, “At the heart of the plan was our vision to be leaders and innovators and to create a dynamic learning organization” (Williamson, 2013, p. 134). Fully realizing this vision would involve developing an engaged workforce operating in a supportive learning environment. One of the action items in the plan was to develop a process for growing management leadership and expertise within the library and rolling it out to all levels of library employees. From this action item the Library Leadership Development Plan (LLDP) was launched in 2009.

The LLDP was designed and delivered by two organizational development specialists, neither of whom were librarians. Organizational development is “an ongoing, thoughtfully planned effort by all members of an organization to improve how that organization operates, serves its stakeholders, fulfills its mission and approaches its vision” (Stephens & Russell, 2004, p. 241). In developing the content of the program, the organizational development specialists gathered input from library employees through focus groups. The first LLDP

was presented to 18 librarians with or without administrative responsibilities. The second LLDP was presented to support staff with supervisory or technical responsibilities. Later iterations, as LLDP3 and LLDP4, were open to all library employees.

The LLDP consists of six modules offered in sessions of two consecutive days in a pleasant off-campus location over several months. Class size is limited to 20 employees. Each module highlights a leadership competency supported by group discussion and individual study. Each module includes a behavioural assessment instrument to encourage self-awareness and better understanding of colleagues. Midway through the program, participants form three teams and each team selects a “leadership action challenge” from a list of leadership topics of interest to academic libraries. This encourages practical application of leadership skills by participants, and recommendations from the challenge reports have found their way into the library’s strategic plan as action items. The *LLDP Program at a Glance* is reproduced in Appendix A. More details about the program can be found in Williamson (2013).

Although the future of the LLDP as an ongoing development program was unknown in 2009, when the inaugural program was offered, it has been well received by employees and library administration has remained committed to the program. The stable program content over time has resulted in a valuable collection of longitudinal data about satisfaction with the program. From an analysis of data from the four LLDP offerings, Braganza(2012) reports “We can infer participants in each cohort gained valuable leadership knowledge and skills” (p. 16).

The University Library collects data from other sources as well. Since 2005, there has been an annual employee opinion survey including questions to measure employee engagement. As described by Mierke (2013), “in 2005 ... only 54% of library employees were considered to be engaged. However, between 2005 and 2011 this

score steadily increased to 72% and held steady in 2012.” The LLDP and its companion sustaining leadership program is the primary leadership development program in the Library. Although there are other training and development opportunities for employees, the LLDP focusses on leadership, which suggests that it has contributed to the rising engagement scores.

The current study takes a different route and links the development of employees’ leadership competencies and behaviours with changes in the library’s organizational culture based on exposure to leadership development programs.

Literature Review

The leadership and organizational development literature is multi-disciplinary and voluminous compared to the more modest literature focussing specifically on leadership and organizational development occurring in libraries. A special issue of *Library Trends* on organizational development and leadership is edited by Russell and Stephens (2004) and is very helpful. Selected topics discussing the application of organizational development and leadership theory in a library setting include the learning organization by Giesecke and McNeil (2004), organizational culture by Kaarst-Brown, Nicholson, von Dran and Stanton (2004), and organizational development by Stephens and Russell (2004). Leadership in libraries is an important ongoing area of interest because there is a requirement to mentor the next generation of library leaders (Branin, 2012) and to transform libraries through leadership development programs (Fallon, Maxwell, McCaffrey & McMahon, 2011; Jordan, 2012; Merrill & Lindsay, 2009; Michalak, 2012; Williamson, 2013).

Since the research in leadership and leadership development, organizational culture, and the learning organization has occurred mostly in the business disciplines, it is useful to mention the concepts here. There are many definitions of

leadership. A simple, but a useful one, suggested by Day and Antonakis (2012), is: “leadership is purpose-driven action that brings about change or transformation based on values, ideals, vision, symbols and emotional exchanges,” as (p. 5). Thus, leadership becomes embedded in the social interactions among employees who are working towards a common goal. Another definition was developed by the first LLDP cohort in 2009:

[Leadership is] using our behaviour to influence others to willingly follow an idea, process or vision for the common good. Everyone can be a leader, not just by position. There is leadership at all layers and levels within the library. (University of Saskatchewan, 2009).

For individuals and groups, leadership development is the expansion of an individual’s capacity to be effective in leadership roles and process. “Leadership is a social process... LD [leadership development] can be something we do along the way as part of our work, not something additional we do on the side if we have time” (Gaines, 2012, p. 9). An effective leadership development program sets the conditions for direction, alignment, and commitment at the individual, group and organizational levels.

Organizational culture has been widely studied and the findings applied in a variety of work settings where organizations want to maximize effectiveness in complex situations. According to Schein (1985):

The culture of a group is a pattern of shared basic assumptions – invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration - that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel. (Chapter 1, p. 9).

In fact, the strength and stability of a culture is derived from its group-based nature. Therefore, culture is deeply entrenched in organizations and results from the behaviours and attitudes of employees of the organization. Although the culture is always evolving, it takes time to change basic assumptions, so change occurs first with adjustments in employees’ behaviours and attitudes in response to environmental and other factors impacting the organization.

Employees developing leadership skills need the supportive environment of a learning organization. The learning organization is a concept that is characterized by five learning disciplines, one of which is systems thinking. According to Senge (1990), in writing about the learning organization, the practice of systems thinking underlies the other four learning disciplines. Further, the systems thinking discipline is a way of dealing with complexity in organizations by seeing interrelationships rather than linear cause-effect chains. The LLDP introduced library employees to the theory underpinning the five disciplines of a learning organization: shared vision, personal mastery, mental models, group learning, and systems thinking (Senge, 1990, pp. 6-11). A learning organization is one which is “skilled at creating, acquiring and transferring knowledge and modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights” (Giesecke & McNeil, 2004, p. 55). Meanwhile, a leadership development program provides the resources by which employees can develop leadership competencies and behaviours and, in turn, influence the organizational culture.

Aims

The goal of this study was to describe library employees’ perceptions of the impact of the LLDP on themselves, their colleagues, and the organization. The research questions guiding this study were:

- Which leadership behaviours do the LLDP graduates perceive having

developed as a result of their exposure to library leadership development opportunities?

- How do the LLDP graduates rate the effect of library leadership programs on their leadership development?
- Which effects of leadership learning have the LLDP graduates observed in their colleagues and in the organization?

Methods

The study took place in an academic library serving a mid-sized medical/doctoral university in western Canada using grounded theory methodology. This research project was approved by the University of Saskatchewan Research Ethics Board in June 2012.

Grounded theory, as described by Glaser and Strauss (1967), is the methodology used for analyzing the qualitative data collected in this study. It is a systematic approach to data collection and analysis that is, according to Kenealy (2012), increasingly used in organizational and managerial research. Grounded theory is explicitly emergent with the focus is on determining which theory accounts for the research situation, rather than on hypothesis testing. The starting point is data collection using unstructured interviews (Alvesson & Ashcraft, 2012), which is supplemented by observational data, findings from the literature, and additional sampling of relevant data.

In this study, the researcher invited 44 library employees who were graduates of the LLDP to participate in the study. Twenty-one consented, and this number of research participants was sufficient to reach saturation of the data, and therefore the researcher recorded no new responses as the last transcripts were coded. The LLDP graduates participated in one-on-one interviews of 40-60 minutes duration in a neutral study location.

The researcher administered a set of interview questions that included both standardized questions and open-ended questions designed for full exploration of the participants' perceptions of the effect of leadership learning on themselves, their colleagues, and the organization. The interview questions are included in Appendix B. Within a few days of each interview, the researcher prepared an interview transcript to be reviewed by the participant. These source documents were imported into NVivo software for analysis.

NVivo was used to organize verbatim segments from the interview transcripts that expressed the participants' responses to interview questions. The researcher coded segments of the transcripts using the following explanatory headings: skill development, learning opportunities, strategic change management, and shared understanding of organizational vision and values. These headings became the Leadership Learning Model. The researcher assigned levels of importance to the data by frequency or originality of coded responses, as recommended by Sinkovics and Alfoldi (2012) and by Bazeley (2007). The researcher organized interviewees' comments using the categories of the Leadership Learning Model. It was evident that participation in the LLDP had had a positive effect on individuals and the organization.

Results

The Study Population

Although 70 employees graduated from the LLDP from 2009 to 2012, the available study population in summer 2012 was restricted to 44 potential participants because of leaves, vacations, retirements, and resignations. The final study sample consisted of librarians, library assistants, and administrative employees, twenty of whom were women. The majority of the 21 participants were library assistants (9/21) or librarians (9/21), and a minority (3/21) were administrative employees. The librarians and library assistants had different profiles for years

of service as shown in Figure 1. The majority of librarians (5/9) were relative newcomers with 0 to 5 years of service, whereas, the majority of library assistants (5/9) were senior employees with 20 years of service or more. Although it may seem that the administrative employees were under-represented, the proportion of study participants reflects the profile of the library as a whole.

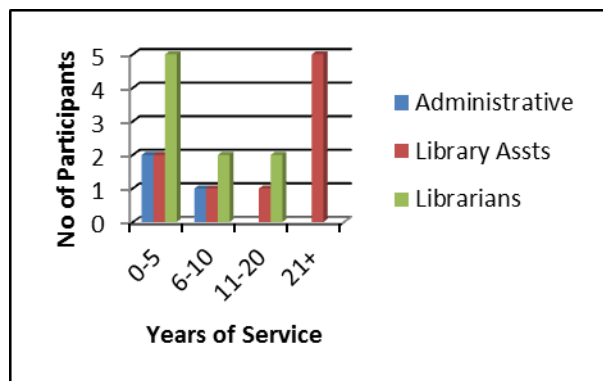


Figure 1
Participants' classification and years of service.

Whether library employees work directly with clients, as in branch libraries, or work with clients internal to the library, as in service units, their perspectives on service may differ. Thus, LLDP organizers took care to include both branch and unit employees in the sessions. All seven branches and all four units in the University Library were represented in the population, with 52% of the participants from branches (11/21) slightly outnumbering 48% of the participants from the units (10/21).

Self-rating Leadership Development

During the interviews, respondents were asked to rate their own leadership development in three time periods: before LLDP, six months after LLDP, and currently. The majority of participants (15/21) perceived an increase in their leadership skill level from the time period, before LLDP, to the current time period. They cited three factors for their improved leadership skills:

- participating in ongoing leadership learning opportunities such as the library's Leadership Community of Practice or Leadership Reading Club;
- personal motivation was used to keep learning; and
- consciously and routinely applying new skills in their work.

Those participants (6/21) whose leadership development did not increase after attending the LLDP cited the following reasons:

- work demands leaving no time for participating in continuing learning opportunities;
- substantial leadership experience and learning prior to the LLDP;
- changing work roles; and
- failing to use the skills they had developed.

Overall, the majority of respondents (15/21) answering this question saw their self-identified leadership rating improve as result of attending the Library Leadership Development Program.

Leadership Learning Model

Five open-ended questions asked for fuller exploration of the participants' perceptions of the value of leadership learning and the effect of leadership learning on themselves, their colleagues, and the organization (see Appendix B). As the responses were coded and different organizational schemes were tried, the following categories kept reappearing: skill development, learning opportunities, strategic change management, and shared understanding of organizational vision and values. These categories formed the Leadership Learning Model, which was devised by the researcher as a way to organize the interview responses. Upon reviewing the literature, the researcher found that these categories often appeared in combination with other categories in descriptions of the essential components of

leadership learning programs. The model has two categories in common (skill development and shared understanding of vision and values) with the discipline of systems thinking, which includes shared vision, personal mastery, mental models, and group learning (Senge, 1990). The four categories are discussed in greater detail with verbatim comments from interview participants.

Skill Development

In the category of skill development, the behaviours resulting from their exposure to leadership learning and development opportunities that were most often cited by respondents were increased self-awareness (14/21 participants) and increased self-confidence (10/21 participants). The assessment and feedback instruments offered by the LLDP and other leadership opportunities allowed participants to explore their own strengths and weaknesses. For example, participant 16 noted that, “the idea of not always focussing on what’s

wrong, this was much more positive, building on what’s good, let’s recognize what is working which is really nice”.

Some interviewees perceived leadership learning to be of value personally, while others cited professional growth. Participant 16 noted, “[I] remember it being said that leadership can happen in your personal life. I hadn’t thought of that”. Participant 21 analyzed leadership learning as,

Any learning, but specifically leadership learning to me has made me a better person, professionally. A lot of that has to do with the confidence it’s given me, the fact that I will seek opportunities, it’s given me a bit more of a polish that I can now seek out these opportunities and be a team member and take on more of a leadership role on committees, volunteering more to take on tasks associated with committees.

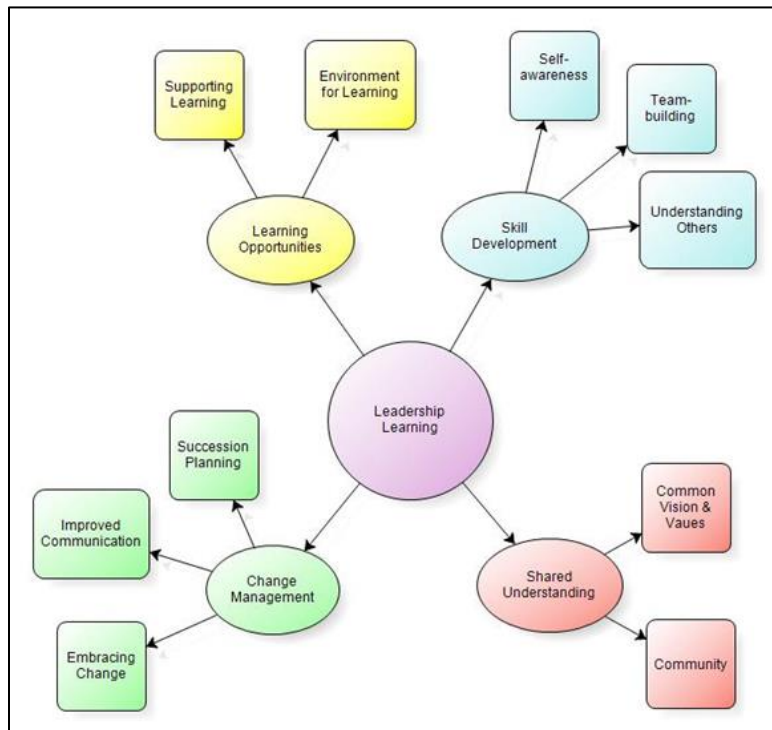


Figure 2
Leadership learning model.

According to participant 2, leadership learning is, "allowing me to stay fresh and excited because leadership in a managerial or supervisor role can be tiring and exhausting and difficult from time to time." According to participant 9:

Showing leadership isn't necessarily being the CEO running an office. It's being the CEO of your life. You have the tools to decide where you want to go with this. You can change the way you think about your career, your life, how you handle situations or you can stay the same. It's stirring something up that's making you face some of these things that you've never uncovered.

Participant 21 noted:

The majority of people I speak to have been glad they went through LLDP, they have confidence. Roles and responsibilities have changed because they are now applying for positions, because they feel they have the skills and confidence. They are moving outside that box that they were in before. I think we are seeing more progression in career paths.

In addition to developing self-awareness and self-confidence, participants commented on their enhanced understanding of the perspectives and actions of others. In the LLDP, cohort members shared the results from their personality instruments with one another, leading to a better understanding of themselves and also why colleagues behave as they do. Interviewees commented that as a result of their deeper understanding of colleagues' behaviours they were more accepting of others. They recognized and appreciated diversity more and felt greater respect for their colleagues, which resulted in positive behaviours such as being less critical and more tolerant, patient, and empathetic toward colleagues.

Participant 14 spoke about "recognizing that just because they [other employees] are doing things differently doesn't mean it's wrong, recognizing behavioural styles and different personalities, it really helps to understand where a person is coming from". Meanwhile, participant 11 noted:

Learning about myself is a big benefit, but learning about others is bigger which leads to being more patient and empathetic". Participant 14's attitude towards colleagues was, "being a better coach and mentor, being less critical, being more open and giving the person more time to grow, and just being more tolerant.

With improved understanding of others came more effective and efficient personal and professional relationships.

Team-building is an activity that results from individual skill development and awareness of others. The LLDP presented theory about the characteristics of high-functioning teams which was subsequently applied in practice as teams were formed and members worked collaboratively for program-end presentations. Participants noted that teams seemed to work better after the LLDP because there was a common understanding of the attributes of teams and how effective teams operate. According to participant 2, "LLDP has certainly helped the team approach that shared roles and responsibilities and staff contributing and being part of teams and saying 'I'll try that,'" while participant 12 noted, "before I used to think who broke it, now I think how can we fix it? It's a mind shift. If I do one thing better today than before then it's ok."

Employees commented on the shared experience and language of leadership learning that helped improve their relationships with colleagues and boosted collaboration. Participant 12 explained:

[LLDP has affected] the majority of people who have gone through; it's

become a good conversation piece among people who don't associate usually. There is more communication and a shared experience to build on. It's creating an atmosphere that we are all one group.

Participant 21 agreed:

Indeed, because the teams and individuals are the foundation of the organization, and if the individuals and the teams are working effectively, then this will be reflected in the organization and it will work better.

The idea of "leading from where you are" is a tagline from the LLDP, and 4/21 interviewees included that specific phrase in their answers. According to participant 16,

"There is wider recognition that you can lead from wherever you are, [you] didn't need to be in a formal leadership position; it just raised my awareness that I did have some influence that I didn't think I had previously".

Overall, the skills that participants developed and the behaviours learned as individuals and on teams have created a cohort of self-aware and engaged employees.

Learning Opportunities

The learning opportunities category relates to the development of holistic leaders working in a supportive learning organization. Learning by doing was observed in the Library's environment of leadership development. Interviewees expressed a desire to make time in their busy lives to hone and practice leadership skills and apply them until they became automatic. Participant 4 commented that, "a lot of this stuff you hear it over and over again and it eventually becomes natural as opposed to a

conscious act, while participant 21 noted, "I think we learned that for the future we will always be able to apply [learning] and make the organization better and serve our users.". Interviewees showed their commitment to learning with their comments about sustaining leadership in the library. They noted that self-directed groups such as the Leadership Community of Practice, the Leadership Reading Club, and other sustaining opportunities, all foster ongoing learning. They also noted that library management's commitment to leadership development has been reflected in higher numbers of employees participating in library-sponsored leadership learning opportunities. Participant 19 noted that, "more people are showing up to events and training, more of the library staff goes to sessions."

Arising from the value of the shared learning experience, the LLDP graduates showed their commitment to the learning organization by lobbying library managers to continue to support learning opportunities that are available for all employees. According to one, "any investment that an organization makes in training of any kind is always worth it" (participant 22). Another noted, "I became an advocate for LLDP; I encouraged several people personally who were thinking of taking the next session after mine" (participant 10), while a third commented, "there is also a little bit more of a realization that you risk being left behind, if you don't change" (participant 12).

In terms of developing diverse skills, participants cited cross-training opportunities as one way to help improve relationships and dissolve real or perceived barriers or silos. Participant 10 noted, "staff don't need to move around but it's useful if there is a cross-training opportunity and you get a different perspective". Overall, participants valued a learning environment where they could participate actively in their own learning, develop new skills, and share learning with colleagues.

Change Management

Organizations use strategic change management tools such as improved communication and alignment of priorities to help build change-related skills. Thus, an objective of the LLDP was “to develop a plan with change management and communications strategies, including success factors, to increase probability of positive leadership skill development” (Clarke, 2010, p. 3). The LLDP and other University Library-sponsored leadership learning opportunities have addressed the theory of change in organizations and the importance of clear and open communication at all levels in the organization.

There is evidence from participants’ comments that:

- they acknowledge that change is inevitable;
- they feel more confident about embracing change including feeling more flexible in their approaches to work; and
- some have expressed a personal desire for change.

Employees have been introduced to change management tools in the LLDP and that has taken away some of the fear of change. They have embraced change as inevitable and potentially beneficial and are beginning to perceive ways of working in the organization that are more flexible and experimental. Participant 11 noted, “because of our history here, people don’t accept change too well, so it was good to get people introduced into it.” Another interviewee mentioned that, “staff are adapting to changes now, they know change is inevitable” (participant 12), and according to participant 10, “I see people changing and ideas are forming and people are more willing to talk about those things and look at things from different perspectives.” As noted by participant 5,

I have said this to lots of people that I feel fortunate to work in an organization that supports leadership. It takes a lot of time and effort and it’s a big investment of resources. I don’t think everyone recognizes how huge the opportunity is.

Participants felt that improved communication helped make them more aware of the details of change occurring in the organization and more aware of the effects of those changes on the organization. One noted, “we are not implementing this change because we want to do something to you; it’s just better for the organization to do it this way” (participant 11), while “Communication with staff is better, there is more transparency” (participant 18). Some felt an expectation to give opinions and a new freedom to question decisions, although others felt that feedback was not always welcomed. Participant 11 would, “step out of my comfort zone and do things I wouldn’t have done before and speak more, give my opinion”.

An important aspect of change management is succession planning, which appears as initiatives in both the University of Saskatchewan’s People Plan (2013a) and the Library Strategic Plan (2013b). The strategic plan was created in 2006 by a large team with broad library representation. It makes public the vision, mission, and values of the University Library which are supported by four strategies. The plan is reviewed annually and action items related to the strategies may be added or removed. A report card keeps track of the progress of all action items. Central themes in the strategic plan recognize the critical role of library employees in all aspects of library services, collections, and facilities development. The People Plan was created using a similar process that developed the strategic plan. The four core people strategies are: learn and develop, relationships and collaboration, appreciate and celebrate, and conversation and communication. By providing employees with the means to develop leadership skills and fostering the learning environment with

sustaining leadership development offerings, the organization expects that employees will develop leadership competencies and behaviours that contribute to transformation. This will also address, in part, managing the employee complement for optimal performance. Participant 16 noted,

I don't know if this is related directly to the library leadership program but I do feel a bit of pressure that the expectation is that the ones who are here will be expected to take on more leadership roles.

Participant 17 echoed that thought, "You are not management, but we expect leadership from you".

Interviewees were well aware of the generational change occurring in the library with the departure of experienced, mature employees and the intake of new employees with marketable skills that the transformed library needs. As noted in the individual skill development section, the LLDP has had a positive effect on team building, collaboration and positive behaviours including respect for each other. As a result, there is more sharing of knowledge and more flexible approaches to completing tasks. Participant 18 commented,

With our clients, they come to the library and talk to people who are excited about the library and engaged with the library it makes a more positive experience with the library. Newer staff are engaged, but the older staff after taking the program are a little bit more positive[ly].

Interviewees indicated that certain job duties need to evolve to satisfy the career plans of employees who now see themselves as leaders. Participant 2 noted,

It's a challenge [for supervisors keeping control] because all of a sudden they've

got people who want to participate in lots of things and want to show their initiative, they have great ideas they want to share them and apply them".

Overall there is a new acceptance of the inevitability of change, without fear, and a willingness to accept challenges and work together for the betterment of the organization.

Shared Understanding of the Organization's Vision and Values

Shared understanding of the organization's vision and values is a fundamental aspect of leadership development, in which the direction of the organization is spelled out in living strategic planning documents and employees are encouraged to align their activities to support the organization's goals. A strong sense of community also arises from shared understanding of the organization's vision and values.

The Strategic Plan and the People Plan make public the values and dreams of the organization, and describe the initiatives required to move towards achieving the transformative vision. In terms of understanding the organization's vision and values, participants noted that a grasp of the "big picture" view of the organization is more common than in the past and there is increased comprehension of progress towards the transformation as described in the library's vision. Participant 10 explained, "what I saw that I would really applaud [in] coming to this organization was the planning, the organization, strategic directions, and the focus on growth, training and change". Participant 12 noted,

I personally like to be someone who has a better knowledge of the big picture. Some people want to come in and [they say], 'let me do my job, I want to fly under the radar'. I like to know where I fit in with regards to the rest of the organization.

The Library Strategic Plan and the People Plan are also documents that guide personal development, as noted by participant 8:

Leadership development speaks to aligned priorities whatever leadership looks like, whether it's a formal role or not, it's a sense of ownership of being part owner of this space and this place and this organization, so I don't feel like just a number putting in time to do a certain amount of work every day. It feels like I have stake in this.

The environment of strategic planning in the University Library is reinforced by the University's open discussion and development of its integrated plan. There is the perception by the University that the Library is a valued employer because they focus on developing employees. According to one interviewee, "we [the University Library] are much more strategic in the way we work by aligning with the university and it seems to reinforce what we're doing and why we're doing certain things" (participant 1). This was echoed by participant 12, who noted "in the campus community, I interact with a number of people and the library is seen as a progressive employer. It's not perfect, but the library is one of the more progressive units".

Another aspect of developing a shared understanding of the vision and values is a strong sense of community. This sense was fostered by the LLDP in the intensive shared learning experience and has been built upon by other leadership learning opportunities. There was general recognition that participation in leadership development opportunities provided LLDP participants with tools and information to behave as leaders, which in turn helped create a more positive mindset towards work, better relationships with colleagues, and a sense of their place in the organization. Several interviewees concurred, such as participant 17, who noted, "for people who buy in, it's affirming, it's motivating," while another

commented "[there was] more collegiality later amongst the staff of four cohorts that have the same language" (participant 14). On a similar theme, "there's much more acceptance of changes in roles and responsibilities, and more shared roles and responsibilities" (participant 2). Participant 7 expressed confidence in the learning community, saying, "I am seeking out relationships that might have been intimidating to me before." Overall, the shared understanding of the vision and values underscores the importance of each employee's contribution to the organization and creates momentum towards achieving the transformative vision.

The culture of the organization is being changed by the behaviours and attitudes of employees who have embraced leadership development. These are the kind of employees who will contribute to and sustain a learning organization. As noted by Giesecke and McNeil (2004), employees "are engaged and accountable; they appreciate change; accept challenge; are able to develop new skills; and are committed to the organization's vision and values" (p. 55). University Library employees see themselves as leaders and have expectations of themselves, of their colleagues, and of the organization to achieve a common vision.

Discussion

Using the Leadership Learning Model as a framework for organizing the varied responses from the interviews, it is the perception of the LLDP graduates that the program has helped them develop leadership behaviours and competencies. This was asked by the first research question.

For the category of individual skill development, participants reported increased self-confidence and self-awareness, and a deeper understanding of, and respect for, others. Interpersonal relationships between individuals and among groups are more open and collaborative, and individuals are prepared to

share knowledge and break down silos in the organization. This is evidence of a self-aware and engaged workforce.

In the area of learning opportunities, participants valued learning and recognized the importance of sustained leadership development for themselves and for all employees in the organization. They were prepared to lead from where they are and to continue learning, developing and practicing leader behaviours and competencies. This is evidence of commitment to learning and becoming a more skilled and forward-thinking workforce.

Participants demonstrated an altered perspective of change in the workplace. They embraced change as inevitable and potentially beneficial, and no longer to be feared. They acknowledged that improved and increased communication at all levels has made decision-making seem more transparent and understandable throughout the organization. They have more flexible attitudes toward work, how it is accomplished, and by whom. This is evidence of a workforce that can appreciate change and accept challenges.

Finally, interviewees reported a deeper understanding of the organization's vision and values and an enhanced mental image of their place in the organization. Knowing that their contributions to the organization were important translated into an enhanced service philosophy and heightened leadership expectations for everyone in the organization. A stronger sense of community has developed through shared learning experiences coupled with a deeper understanding of the organization's vision and values. Shared activity towards a common goal provides the momentum that moves the organization closer to achieving its vision. This is evidence of employees who are accountable with a commitment to the organization's vision and values.

The second research question asked how LLDP graduates rated the effect of the program on their development. Overall, the majority of respondents (15/21) answering this question saw their self-identified leadership rating improve as result of attending the LLDP. The success factors cited included participation in ongoing leadership activities, personal motivation to continue learning, and consciously applying new skills at work. Learning was hampered for others by competing demands on their time, changing work roles, and failure to practice and develop leadership skills.

The third research question asked the LLDP graduates for their perceptions of changes to the organizational culture. Culture is deeply entrenched in organizations and cannot be imposed externally; it has to develop internally in response to conditions within the organization, and is always evolving. Changes in the culture of an organization are first seen as changes in the behaviours and attitudes of employees, and occur over time as basic assumptions are changed. This study indicates that the library's organizational culture is changing as employees develop their leadership competencies and behaviours. Their competencies and behaviours are changing the organization's culture to be more collaborative, flexible, open to change and challenge, supportive of learning, able to create and use knowledge, and focussed on achieving the vision and living the values.

The inherently conservative nature of the library organization resists opportunities to develop fully into a learning organization. There are a number of examples of deficits, including fear of risk-taking, failure to foster innovative thinking or reflection, discomfort with feedback from colleagues, and failure to translate learning into practice. All are opportunities to learn, but may fall prey to reverting to old ways of thinking and doing. The response to the conservative organization that is resisting change is to support and empower employees through a strong and sustainable leadership development

program in a supportive learning environment that allows them to keep the transformative vision in view at all times.

Conclusions

The University Library's vision to transform library collections, facilities, services and the organizational culture is activated by initiatives in its strategic planning documents. Some of those initiatives focus on the development of leaders within the organization whose leadership competencies and behaviours will, by combined effort, change the culture of the organization. According to the responses in interviews given by graduates of the LLDP, the investment in learning for employees has paid off by creating a cohort of workers who are self-aware and engaged. These employees appreciate change, accept challenges, are able to develop new skills, and are committed to achieving the organization's vision and values.

Their leadership behaviours and competencies developed by employees during the Library Leadership Development Program offerings have translated into changes in the organizational culture. Participants perceive the culture to be more collaborative, operating more transparently, open to change, supportive of learning and creating new knowledge, and focussed on a common vision. The cycle involving leadership development occurring in a supportive learning organization leads to continuous progress towards the library's transformative vision of leaders and innovators operating in a learning organization.

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Appendix A
Sample LLD Program at a Glance

MODULE 1	MODULE 2	MODULE 3	MODULE 4	MODULE 5	MODULE 6
Leadership & Relationship Building	Team Building	Leading Change	Planning & Accountability	Leadership & Organizational Culture	Personal Mastery & Organizational Effectiveness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what is leadership? • personal style • communication • developing others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stages of team development • team player style • team effectiveness • team charter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leadership style • effective change process • mindset • impacts • Appreciative Inquiry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nature of strategic management • aligning goals & objectives • defining & developing accountability • participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what is culture? • how does it form? • creating a learning & service culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal growth • presentations re: organizational leadership challenge • ongoing leadership learning plans
Discussion topic: Communication	Discussion topic: Collaboration	Discussion topic: Transformation	Discussion topic: Transparency	Discussion topic: Organizational Culture	Discussion topic: Mastery
Assessment tool:	Assessment tool:	Assessment tool:	Assessment tool:	Assessment tool:	Assessment tool:
Leadership Action Challenge Team Status Report 1/2 day					

Appendix B: Interview Questions

Project Title: Leadership Learning and Organizational Culture in an Academic Library

The interview consists of nine questions in total. The first three are simple identification questions followed by a ranking question. There are three complete the sentence type questions. Question #8 explores the organizational culture and the final question asks if you have any final comments on leadership or organizational culture. Are you ready to begin?

1. Please indicate your cohort from the Library Leadership Development Program (LLDP)
 - a. LLDP1
 - b. LLDP2
 - c. LLDP3
 - d. LLDP4

2. Please indicate your bargaining unit
 - a. ASPA
 - b. CUPE
 - c. Faculty Association

3. Please indicate your length of service in the University Library
 - a. 0-5 years
 - b. 6-10 years
 - c. 11-20 years
 - d. 21+ years

4. The University Library began a structured library leadership program in 2009 with LLDP and has continued with sustaining leadership Series 2 and training and development opportunities as part of LDC's program. Considering the leadership opportunities you have experienced since 2009, please rate your own leadership development as high, medium, or low
 - a. Before LLDP
 - b. 6 months after LLDP
 - c. Currently

Can you tell me more about your rating for each of these time periods?

Here are three questions that ask you to complete a sentence with your thoughts

5. To me, library employees who develop and apply leadership skills are ...
 - a. Which behavioural changes have you observed?
 - b. Is there a payoff for the investment in learning? What is it?

6. Developing and applying leadership skills in my work means ...
 - a. Which leadership skills have you developed?
 - b. How have those leadership skills been applied in your work?

7. The value of leadership learning
 - a. to me is ...
 - b. to my team is perceived as ...
 - c. to the organization is perceived as ...

This is the question about the organizational culture in the library and whether or not you have seen changes that you would relate to leadership development programs.

8. Have you seen any changes in the organizational culture resulting from the leadership development program?
 - a. Have the roles and responsibilities of employees changed? How?
 - b. Has distribution of resources changed? How?
 - c. Have operations in your work area changed? How?
 - d. Have strategies for the library changed? How?
 - e. Which key behaviours have you observed?
 - f. What has been the effect of those behaviours on the organization?
 - g. Do you see the leadership learning program affecting the organization in the future? Please tell me more about that?

We are closing in on the end of this interview so I would like to ask if you have

9. Any other thoughts or comments on library leadership and organizational change? Or anything else you would like to mention?

Thank you again for your participation.