Human Resources

Although the human resources function in some public libraries is controlled by the municipality, it is incumbent upon the library director to understand best practices and strive to manage staff resources as effectively, efficiently and compassionately as possible.


Paula Singer’s workshop at the Arizona State Library, “How Human Resources Make Your Library Tick” covered many HR topics such as: What do employees want? Why does it matter? What are current trends in human resources that matter the most for libraries? How can all employees make sure that public libraries exist to serve human needs? See especially slide 19, “Change in Job Satisfaction” which covers the shift from 1987 to 2009 and slide 21 “What Do Employees Want?”


The Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry website separates information for individuals from information for businesses and organizations. Examples of topics include mediation services, workers’ rights, and laws related to labor.

Although the material in “The Changing Library Workforce” focuses on Colorado, there’s lots of good material relevant to Pennsylvania libraries.

Richard T. Sweeney, University Librarian, New Jersey Institute of Technology, lectures often about millennials and intergenerational work forces. See especially his slides #27-32 from “Understanding & Engaging Millennial Employees: A Focus Group,” a presentation at York College. All of his presentations are available on his website.

You can subscribe to the HR Today podcasts, issued once or twice monthly, through iTunes U to receive information on topics such as workplace learning, work engagement, performance reviews, etc.

LibGig’s Who’s Hiring Update is a free semi-monthly publication with the hottest and most recent jobs on the market for information professionals and trends in the industry. It provides useful ideas for internal job searches and exposure for our open positions.

**Personnel Policies and Employee Handbooks**

“Flexible Work Arrangements: A Win-Win for Organizations and Employees,” published by Bridgestar, includes an interview by Laurie Young, co-founder and Principal of Flexible Resources Inc. and co-author of The End of Work As We Know It.

Fulton County Public Library, MI
Southeast Kansas Library System and Iola Public Library, KS
Mt. Lebanon Public Library, PA
Clintonville Public Library, WI Their comprehensive handbook covers topics such as flextime, travel advances, proper attire, and skills testing.

The Kansas Public Library Handbook has a section on Dress Code. The points made are worth considering as to whether your life establishes a dress code, guidelines for dress or does nothing.

Lewis & Clark Library District, IL’s Board approved a staff development policy.

Here’s a policy that probably wasn’t in the your manual a few years ago—Social Networking developed by Ask Rita in HR, two HR attorneys from the Nonprofits Insurance Alliance Group.

Dress codes or dress guidelines can create internal controversy. Here’s a brief discussion: What is your company's attitude toward workplace attire? from SmartBrief on Leadership, October 13, 2010.

Peter J. Ennis, an attorney with Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney PC prepared a white paper, “Should Your Company Have an Employee Handbook?”

Employment Law
The Office of Commonwealth Libraries 20th Annual Trustee Institute featured Brian D. Balonick from Klett Rooney Lieber & Schorling speaking on “Personnel Issues and the Law.” Topics include harassment, ADA, labor laws and personnel policies.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) provides resources that will help libraries prevent occupational injuries and illnesses and comply with the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

The National Network of ADA Centers provides considerable information about the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Although it is unlikely that you as Library Director keep the HR records, you should have an idea of federal requirements. One example is the Fair Labor Standards Act. The business.gov website provides resources and a variety of forms that help employers understand their legal obligations when hiring employees or independent contractors. See especially the sections Specific Requirements and Employment Laws.

Unions and Collective Bargaining

The Institute for Research on Labor and Employment Library, University of California, Berkeley provides a “one-stop public on-line clearing house for cataloged and digitized complete text of union contracts.”

The National Labor Relations Board, an independent federal agency, administers the National Labor Relations Act, the primary law governing relations between unions and employers in the private sector.

Staffing and Salaries


WorldatWork is a global human resources association focused on compensation, benefits, work-life and integrated total rewards to attract, motivate and retain a talented workforce. A faculty member, Steven Seltz, Senior Director of Compensation and Benefits at Siemens Corporation presented “Linking Pay to Performance: An Approach to Designing a Merit Pay Plan,” December 16, 2003.

Mysalary.com has current librarian salary info, but all types of libraries are included. Check out the wizard.
The American Library Association-Allied Professional Association (ALA-APA) has released two downloadable versions of the 2009 edition of the “ALA-APA Salary Survey: Librarian - Public and Academic.” One version contains only public librarian salary data and analysis and the other version is specifically for academic librarians. The “ALA-APA Salary Survey: Librarian – Public” is available at the ALA Store. There is a cost. The public library version includes salary data by five library sizes, from those serving populations between 10,000 and 500,000. Librarian salary data is also available to subscribers to the “ALA-APA Library Salary Database” (data from 2006 to the present) from the ALA Store.

**Compensation Plans**

- **Hesburg Public Library**, WI  
- **Noble County Public Library**, IN  
Although the salaries are dated, the process is still relevant.  
- **Rockingham County**, NC  
- **Springfield**, OR  
Includes library job titles and salaries.

**Performance Reviews**

Employee feedback from other staff beside the supervisor is part of the 360 Assessment that the federal government uses. “With the increased focus on teamwork, employee development, and customer service, the emphasis has shifted to employee feedback from the full circle of sources.”


Yale University Library has prepared *Goal Setting Resource Kit* which provides “helpful tips in developing SMART Goals and assessing job behaviors/competencies” useful for performance appraisals. This is an excellent toolkit and contains performance appraisal forms as well.

Falcone, Paul. *2600 Phrases for Effective Performance Reviews*. New York: AMACOM, 2005. Available through Access Pennsylvania Database. The book covers 25 most commonly rated factors including productivity, decision making, teamwork, customer service, technical skills and more. Also included is an excellent chapter on conducting the performance review including self evaluations, goal setting, and coaching.

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management issued *Addressing and Resolving Poor Performance: A Guide for Supervisors*. The task can be messy and unpleasant, but it’s part of our jobs.


WebJunction has additional information on performance appraisals and sample job performance tools.

**Performance Appraisal Forms**

Allegheny County Library Association, PA
The University of California at Berkeley has a few forms that can be adapted for public library use.

The Mid-Hudson Library System, NY provides guidelines and sample documents.

Performance Evaluation Samples
Sue Keefer, Library Director, Las Animas-Bent County Library District, CO has gathered many sample forms, “Employee Evaluations for Public Library Staff.”

**Interviews**


Lists of interview questions can be found in articles, book chapters and the web. You’ll need to decide for yourself what works when. Here is a sample question developed by Colleen Aylward: “In a team environment, are you a motivator, a player, a leader, or an enthusiast?” Follow her on Twitter. Although you may not use her Interview Studio, her posts on Twitter may provide helpful insight for the interview process.
Many articles and web posts describe the questions supposedly asked at interviews for positions at Microsoft. You may want to consider adapting one or two of these involving non-technical problem solving to learn more about your candidate.


The wiki, "Nailing the Library Interview,” lists several sources of interview questions for various library positions.


Yale University Library Human Resources Department compiled a list of questions not to ask during an interview and guidelines about probing questions.


Job Descriptions

Job descriptions, geared to Connecticut, but includes Pennsylvania and other states.

The Allegheny County Library Association, PA has posted a few generic and specific job descriptions.

San Jose Public Library, CA Librarian I, Librarian II, Library Clerk, Library Page

New Jersey Library Association Library Director, Reference Services Librarian, Youth Services Librarian, Library Assistant

Orientation

Note the example of a system orientation guide from the [Allegheny County Library Association](https://www.alleghenycountylibrary.org), PA.

Although the documents in [New Library Directors’ Orientation Publications and Presentations](https://www.ala.org/ala/mgrts/lnrs/lnrspubs/orientpubs.pdff) are geared to California libraries, there is much there that is useful for Pennsylvania public library directors.

Training and Staff Development


ASTD free featured content changes weekly. See [ASTDs Digital Content](https://www.astd.org/) to browse videos, podcasts, and more

Note especially the chart with outcomes for knowledge, attitudes, skills, and aspirations in “The Case for Learning is a Case for Training: Capacity Building for the Individuals Who Comprise Organizations” by Jan Masaoka and Ken Goldstein.

*You're a Bad Teacher Because You're Too Smart* written by Michelle Braden, CEO of [MSBCoach](https://www.msbcoach.com) stresses “that we have a tendency to forget that the information we are sharing is NEW to those we are teaching.” This is based on Medina, John. *Brain Rules.* Seattle, WA: Pear Press, 2008. Available through Access Pennsylvania Database. Check out the videos on the [author’s website](https://www.msbcoach.com/).

The [Charlotte Mecklenburg Employee Learning and Development Curriculum](https://www.charlottemecklenburglibrary.org/learning-and-development/) lists several courses available for staff. The outlines may be helpful in devising CE for your staff.

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library has a buddies program for new hires. Select their "A Sense of Belonging Flyer."

At the CLENE Continuing Library Education Network and Exchange Roundtable at the ALA Annual Conference, Anaheim, CA, 2008, Cal Shepherd from SOLINET presented a session, "Implementing A Staff Development Plan." His PowerPoint slides provide rationale and planning ideas.

"Taking Work-based Learning to the Next Level," a 15-minute panel discussion, discusses the development of talent within organizations. Although it is geared to huge firms, the library director actually handles this role in the development of people and leadership skills that are aligned with the library's mission. iTunes U, Knowledge@Wharton, free podcast for your PC or iPod device (Must register for an account).


YouTube provides an opportunity to showcase staff expertise. Amigos Library Services, now part of Lyrasis, for example, demonstrates book mending on YouTube. “Mending a Book with Book Repair Tape” and “Hinge Tightening Instructions” may provide ideas how your library can show off staff knowledge.


Listen to a session recording of "Learning Virtually: Online Professional Development for Library Workers with Tight Budgets and Full Schedules." The participants provide information on current trends in e-learning, the role of the e-learner, and the use of virtual space in training and development via e-learning. This was recorded at the American Library Association Annual Conference, June 28, 2008.

“Best Practices Professional Development for Librarians,” presented by Fe Angela M. Verzosa at the Medical and Health Librarians Association of the Philippines Congress in February 2009, has useful slides labeled “Best Practices.”

The Staff Development Committee of the American Library Association, Library Administration and Management Association (LAMA), Human Resources Section (HRS) maintains a Staff Development Clearinghouse at the ALA Headquarters Library.
Materials include staff development and personnel policy statements, training and orientation manuals, staff development programs, projects, a list of pertinent web sites, and referrals. Although the list is not up-to-date there are lots of excellent resources.

This is an internal presentation by Brett Lear, Jefferson County Public Library: “Training Library Staff to Be ‘In Charge’.”

Cal Shepard, formerly of Solinet, presented “Implementing a Staff Development Plan.”

Sandra Nelson developed *Time Flies.. But Where? Time Management Tips and Tools*, an 2010 electronic publication in the Public Library Association’s fee-based Train the Trainer Series. “This training program will help participants to:
- Evaluate the balance between work life and personal life, and identify needed changes
- Understand how work habits and personality affect time management choices” and much more.

A self-guided learning program for Skokie Public Library staff, “10 Things@SPL,” is based on the concepts of “define, discover, and do.” An article is posted on the North Suburban Library System (IL) website, “The 10 Things @ SPL: Inside Skokie Public Library’s Staff Learning Program,” by Richard Kong, Skokie Public Library, May 28, 2008 provides background.

Well over 700 libraries and organizations have adopted “23 Things,” “a revolutionary staff development learning concept centered on social collaboration tools. Helene Blowers successfully created the first program while at the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.” The PLCMC blog provides background and information for those libraries that would like to emulate this program.

The American Library Association Learning Roundtable’s blog, September 25, 2010, posting, 5 Library Sources for Quick Computer Training points to the outstanding handouts from Akron-Summit County Public Library.

Reed, Lori and Pat Carterette, “Creating a Culture of Learning in Your Library.” This American Library Association Annual presentation, July 2009, demonstrates variations on the theme of training vs. learning.

Meredith Farkas posted “Continuous Learning: Making it a Priority Without Breaking the Bank” on her blog TechEssence and also contributed it to WebJunction. She provides helpful tips for learners and administrators.

How do you put a value on the outcome of training? Cermak, Jenny and Monica McGurk, in “Putting a Value on Training” write that “training programs generate greater value for organizations when the curricula reflect key business performance metrics.”
Testing real-world outcomes is crucial.” This *McKinsey Quarterly* article, July 2010, requires free registration.

A variety of publications discuss the staff development function in libraries. See Access Pennsylvania Database:


Professional management seminars sometimes come to town or a nearby location and may offer specific topics needed by just one or two staff members. They will also contract with your library for classroom settings. Examples are: CareerTrack Seminars and Fred Pryor Seminars.

Other opportunities include:
- Development Dimensions International
- Lominger
- Crisp Learning off the shelf training programs
- Franklin Covey courses on time management.

Local universities and colleges, community colleges and other educational institutions offer a wealth of courses, workshops and seminars that just might need your needs. Although not all Commonwealth educational providers belong to the Continuing Education Association of Pennsylvania, their membership list might be a start.

**Train the Trainer**

Very often we employ “training the trainer” scenario to instruct our staff. Although staff trainers may be very knowledgeable about the material, too often they
have not had experience either in teaching or training. Some of these materials available through Access Pennsylvania Database might be helpful to them:

*The AMA Trainers’ Activity Book: A Section of the Best Learning Exercises from the World’s Premiere Training Organization*, ed. by Carolyn Nilson. New York: American Management Association, 2004. The topics of creativity and compromise are included. An overview, the table of contents and the ability to browse are available on the publisher’s website.


Hart, Lois Borland and Charlotte S. Waismann. *The Leadership Training Activity Book: 50 Exercises for Building Effective Leaders*. New York: AMACOM, 2005. {netLibrary electronic book} Topics include trust, values, networking, conflict resolution, diversity, negotiation, listening skills, mentoring, vision, communication and more. An overview, the table of contents and the ability to browse are available on the publisher’s website.


Miller, Brian Cole. *Quick Teambuilding Activities for Busy Managers: 50 Exercises That Get Results in Just 15 Minutes*. New York: AMACOM, 2004. An overview, the table of contents and the ability to browse are available on the publisher’s website.


Withers, Bill and Keami D. Lewis. *The Conflict and Communication Activity Book: 30 High-Impact Training Exercises for Adult Learners*. New York: AMACOM, 2003. {netLibrary electronic book} This is especially helpful in areas of conflict resolution and problem solving. An overview, the table of contents and the ability to browse are available on the publisher’s website.

ASTD provides an extensive series of publications on topics associated with training the trainer. There is a fee.

**Staff Days**

Lyrasis has mounted a comprehensive guide that includes a helpful needs assessment tool, “Public Library: How-To-Tips on Planning a Staff Day.”
Staff Day Success! Tips for Planning, Delivering, and Evaluating All-Staff Events

This material has been created for the Infopeople Project supported by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered in California by the State Librarian. Although membership in the Corporation for National & Community Service is required to directly borrow materials, the bibliography, “Volunteer and Staff Recognition Resources” is useful, and materials can be requested through normal ILL channels.


A handout from the presentation at the 2010 Public Library Association Conference, “Staff Day Success: Creating an Event Valued by All Employees” includes a page full of resources and tips so that the planning and execution run smoothly. The slideshow provides other tips and vivid graphics.

Although membership in the Corporation for National & Community Service is required to directly borrow materials, the bibliography, “Volunteer and Staff Recognition Resources” is useful, and materials can be requested through normal ILL channels.

Diversity


Karen Brown Letarte’s presentation at the National Diversity in Libraries Conference, October 3, 2008, “Diversity 2.0: Achieving New Levels of Excellence” stresses not only recruitment, but retention and advancement. Letarte was then a consultant with SOLINET.


The Pennsylvania Interbranch Commission for Gender, Racial, and Ethnic Fairness was created to promote fair and equal justice within the judicial system. Its *Diversity Recruitment Resources* booklet provides suggestions for recruiting a more diverse and high quality workforce.

**Diversity Resources**

- REFORMA
- BCALA
- Special Libraries Association Gay & Lesbian Issues Caucus
- American Library Association Office for Diversity
- National Diversity in Libraries Conference
- COLT
- SSIRT
- LIBSUP-L

**Professional Organizations and Resources**

- **ASTD** (American Society for Training & Development) National and Local Chapters.
- **SHRM** (Society for Human Resources Management) National and Local Chapters. There’s a tab on their website that provides Templates and Tools. Although membership is required for the templates, many resources are readily available.

**WebJunction Courses**

**WebJunction Pennsylvania** provides a large selection of free and discounted online workshops and training courses available to library employees, library board members, and trustees in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This service is supported by a grant from the Office of Commonwealth Libraries. Log on to your account for access to courses such as those listed under Personnel Management.