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A Passion Deficit: Occupational Burnout and the New Librarian
A Recommendation Report

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Burnout is about an employee's relationship with their work (Harwell, 2013, n.p.). It involves a prolonged exposure to workplace **stressors** that often drain an employee's vitality and enthusiasm, and lead to less engagement and productivity. Burnout increases turnover rates and absenteeism; causes decreased performance, workplace accidents and poor customer service; and sometimes leads to litigation. It also threatens the integrity and professionalism of an individual. **Emotional labor**—sometimes referred to as "emotion work" or "emotion management"—contributes heavily to the burnout factor by forcing an employee to control his or her feelings in order to fulfill the goals or expectations of an organization. The combination of job dissatisfaction and negative emotional labor can lead to occupational burnout, or a "passion deficit".

Exploration into this problem began as a response to this research question: "What are the best solutions for preventing occupational burnout in librarianship?" To accomplish that research, I examined current studies in the literature, on-the-job emotional labor issues that affect librarians adversely, and compared and evaluated solutions noted in the literature for efficacy. The information in this report determines the causes and effects of this problem, and suggests administrative and personal techniques to prevent the escalation of this issue within the profession. Solutions discussed here could possibly prevent and/or reverse the symptoms of occupational burnout, and a passion deficit, in the field of librarianship.

Significant Issues

Current literature identifies work-related causes of stress. At the organizational level, mental weariness, cynicism or depersonalization, and feelings of dissatisfaction brought about by the ongoing impact of emotional labor all work together to affect a workforce negatively (Harwell, 2013, n.p.). Burnout is an "unfortunate side effect of a career that puts the needs of others first" (DelGuidice, 2011, p. 23), often draining the vitality and enthusiasm of an employee, and leading to less engagement and productivity. Work related stressors include issues pertaining to

- **Workload**: too much work and too little time to accomplish the demand; lack of on-the-job support systems; insufficient help; technology problems and rapid technological growth; and a "lack of closure on ongoing projects" (Harwell, 2013, n.p.).

- **Control**: a lack of influence on-the-job; budget cuts; service reductions; obnoxious or rude patrons; and poor management and supervision.
- **Recognition**: a deficit that includes low salaries, limited opportunities for advancement, and increased competition for jobs.
- **Image**: a blurred idea of occupational and societal roles; too many tasks that cross departmental lines; and a poor public representation.
- **Value**: job discrimination; unrealistic organizational and public expectations; and shifting priorities (Harwell, 2013, n.p.)

Significant Findings

Researchers have identified a stress and burnout factor in librarianship. In recent decades, libraries worldwide have experienced profound change. The need for expertise within the field has presented new challenges and hazards, and forced the occupation to compete for limited resources in the organizational chain. In the public sector, libraries have become community-building forces of civic engagement, economic development, neighborhood revitalization, and workforce progress. In academia, the additions of coffee shops and learning spaces have created a campus social-building force (Hernon & Altman, 2010, p. 52). Budget cuts resulting in lower pay and fewer resources, technology demands, time restraints, added responsibilities, and downsizing have forced librarians to prove their professional value and defend their occupational status. A 2006 study performed by the British Psychological Society's Division of Occupational Psychology dealt with the issue of occupational stress among firefighters and police officers, train operators and teachers, and librarians. Surmising that librarians might experience less on-the-job stress, it was discovered they ranked "highest in the level of perceived stress overall" (Casey, 2012, n.p.), resulting in the conclusion that librarians are highly susceptible to workplace burnout.

Although all organizations teem with emotion, and burnout may be significant in many occupations, these additional challenges and demands have created an institutional imbalance, which has led to the need for a makeover. American popular culture has negatively portrayed librarians to the extent that "image" has become one of the top five concerns—nearly equal to library finances, information access, intellectual freedom, and personnel resources. As a means to redesign the negative "librarian of the past," library associations have sponsored media campaigns to combat adverse stereotyping, resulting in a

new kind of stereotype. The twenty-first century stereotype personifies a New Librarian. This "New Breed" exudes vitality and enthusiasm, passion and youth, and is expected to recast librarians as new-century information scientists, scholars, and subject specialists.

The explosive growth of technology and social media dramatically expanded the perceived role of the New Librarian into that of a multitasking, boundless expert. As an innovation-driven new identity expected to be a force for changing the world through technology and social enterprise, the New Librarian is branded by not only information access and management, but also speed, accuracy, and knowledge presentation. The pressures of identifying with and representing this new image, and increased professional collaboration with a global public, add a higher ethical dimension to an already emotionally demanding profession, exacerbating an established susceptibility to burnout in an oppressive political climate.

Summary of Recommendations

Final recommendations are derived from preferred solutions weighed and measured against specific criteria. These solutions are taken from secondary research studies; library science leadership and management Web sites; occupational hazard Web sites; encyclopedias; and library and information science career development Web sites. Recommendations noted in this report briefly include:

- educating students of library science before they enter the field
- educating employees about on-the-job emotional labor and stress management
- offering directives for library administrators and associations for teaching in-house strategies easily implemented across hierarchies

Methods

Popular culture, literature, and online resources offer diverse recommendations for dealing with the demands of librarianship, on-the-job stress, and negative emotional labor resulting from that stress. This report offers an examination of current studies to answer the research question: "What are the best solutions for preventing occupational burnout in librarianship?" To determine reliable solutions, my project plan breaks this study into four tasks. Results provided here specifically address information taken from the incorporated literature review, and include:

- **Task 1:** background information into this problem
- **Task 2:** researched solutions presented in the literature
- **Task 3:** notable measurable results, and conclusions drawn from those results
- **Task 4:** specific recommendations to resolve this issue in the workplace

Project Plan

Task 1: **Research current studies focusing on the problem.** I examined valuable information from prominent journals; secondary library and online resources; encyclopedic and magazine databases and periodical indexes; and reviewed blogs, newsletters, Web sites and online papers to identify the pulse-beat within the field. I also incorporated timely and verifiable research obtained through field studies, interviews, and questionnaires. Notable studies and opinion pieces consulted for background information into this problem fell into these categories:

- information science and technology periodicals
- leadership and management strategy Web sites, blogs, and Webinars
- Library and Information Science student research
- Library and Information Science encyclopedias
- Library and Information Science career development Web sites
- news divisions of professional associations

Task 2: **Create a discussion of possible solutions noted in the literature.** This discussion identifies researched solutions presented in the literature review performed in *Task 1*.

Self-examination. Previous how-to literature presents *Self-examination* as a criterion to dispel burnout tendencies. It suggests that, "although patrons may be rude, unreasonable, or even violent in their interaction with a librarian, the situation that causes the problem is what is to be addressed" (Shuler & Morgan, 2013, p. 121). *Self-examination* techniques include:

- defining how you personally may have contributed to the problem
- silently saying to yourself, "I will not get angry; I will stay in control"
- being aware of your body language and body cues (Shuler & Morgan, 2013, p. 121)

Coping Strategies. As a means to stay true to professional standards, occupational codes of conduct (also known as feeling rules or **display rules**) reference specific *Coping Strategies* for limiting on-the-job stress when dealing with upset or stressed patrons. These involve ignoring a patron's emotional state while "focus[ing] on the reference problem at hand" (Shuler & Morgan, 2013, p. 127). *Coping Strategies* might include:

- finding the right information that will ease the patron's distress
- taking oneself out of the responsibility for the patron's mood
- realizing that the librarian understands library practices better than the patron
- verbalizing empathy with the patron (Shuler & Morgan, 2013, p. 128)
- internalizing optimism and refocusing your energies
- developing a detached view of the job and not taking things personally
- knowing your limitations and learning to delegate (Baird & Baird, 2005, n.p.)

Resisting. As a final solution to resolve negative emotional labor issues while smoothing over difficult interactions within the workplace, suggestions include walking away, or *Resisting*:

> Despite the emotional labor expectations of the job, and the ever-higher expectations for friendly service in the library, librarians possess the power to end the interaction and *resist* further emotional labor, if necessary. This technique creates its own problems and is used sparingly . . . (Shuler & Morgan, 2013, p. 128).

Pro-active Solutions. Recent research notes specific *Pro-active Solutions* for managing personal and organizational stress. These include:

- establishing organizational support and flexible scheduling within the work place
- cultivating professional relationships and practicing organizational positive feedback
- maintaining realistic standards and transferring within an organization
- offering challenging assignments and changing-up assignments
- exercising, taking breaks, developing new skills or hobbies
- asking for help and learning to say no (as cited in The Strange Librarian, 2008, n.p.)

Managerial Contributions. These solutions can be employed within the library setting to address emotional events and stressors throughout all areas of the workplace, and include:

- introducing employees to the concept and analysis of their own emotional labor
- clarifying organizational, institutional or professional norms in mission and vision statements
- establishing concrete rules-of-conduct that describe appropriate emotions expressed on-the-job (Matteson & Miller, 2013, p. 61)
- redistributing responsibilities and cross-training
- employee mentoring and recognition for accomplishments (as cited in Stoops, n.d., n.p.)

Organizational Strategies. These suggestions may work along with *Managerial Contributions* for effective coping, and maintaining a functional stress level:

- attempting to reduce stressors in the workplace
- strengthening an employee's ability to cope with stress
- recognizing and assisting those who are at risk for burnout ("Stress and Burnout in the Library Workplace," 1991)

Task 3: **Measure selected options objectively against criteria and make comparisons.** Notable measurable results, and conclusions drawn from those identified through *Task 2*, determined which solutions were consistent with the needs of librarians, and which offered the greatest advantage. Using a scale of one to five—five being very favorable and one being initially ineffective—I judged the most acceptable solutions by these standards:

- those that showed a measurable *Success Rate*
- those that were easily initiated and transferred across hierarchies (*Effectiveness*)
- those that presented some form of *Health Benefit*
- those that were *Cost* effective

A. *Success Rate*. The literature does not address a measurable success rate for positive individual or organizational outcomes. It is noted here, however, as a means to suggest the importance of continued success. Standards to measure this outcome may include:

- any long-term value
- any consequences from the implemented solutions
- employee perceptions
- dependability of results

B. *Effectiveness*. This criterion defines to what extent specific solutions are applied to the workplace efficiently, and transferred across all areas of librarianship and managerial hierarchies. This standard has an overall weight of 5 to suggest the importance of the efficacy of the solutions within the workplace environment. Standards included:

- a compatibility with existing systems
- easy implementation
- flexibility within hierarchies
- convenience
- user friendliness

C. *Health Benefits*. Based on the negative effects emotional labor produces within an organization, and health complications associated with occupational stressors that result in burnout, standards for this criterion were given an overall weight of 5 and included:

- employees feeling no aversion to the implementation of the solutions
- employees experiencing positive emotions resulting from the solutions
- employees noticing a positive impact on themselves and the workplace

D. *Costs*. Research did not determine any costs related to implementing specific techniques. Nonetheless, because cost effectiveness must be a consideration, the overall weight applied to this criterion was 3 and included standards such as:

- whether or not there was a cost for training
- whether successful longevity was based on any short or long-term monetary commitment

Task 4: **Offer recommendations based on the fulfillment of the standards.** Accumulated from the results of *Task 3,*

I present specific recommendations to resolve this issue in the workplace. Details are noted in the **Conclusions** and **Recommendations** sections of this report.

Results

Task 1: A literature review. The pace of change is radical in the library environment. Keeping up with technology to address the information needs of patrons and the academic community predisposes an "ever-changing array of technology devices, programs and platforms, daily time pressures, and stress" (Jordon, 2014, p. 293). With the addition of coffee shops, town hall meeting rooms and repository areas for community artifacts, the twenty-first century library has become a community work in action, and the New Librarian a perceived force. To create a positive emotional experience in a challenged profession, library associations orchestrated a twenty-first century facelift. Social changes and this transformation improved a former perception of the library from that of a stiff, authoritarian environment, and the librarian from that of an unskilled, cranky bookworm (Jordan, 2014, p. 291). This makeover converted the library into a social institution, produced a New Librarian, and unfortunately, more stress.

Research notes that each type of library possesses its own negative pressures and problems: "Academic librarians may feel pressure to achieve tenure. Law librarians may feel incredibly stressed as they serve demanding professionals who are themselves under a lot of pressure . . . . technical services staff, who work behind the scenes in acquisition and cataloging, may feel underappreciated by librarians who serve the public" (Martin, 2009, n.p.). Additionally, the New Librarian may often experience other pressures and problems, such as:

- inadequate knowledge or skills to perform assignments
- significantly increased workloads and deadlines
- fewer staff and more patrons
- increasingly disgruntled or obnoxious patrons
- technology-related problems
- continuous interruptions
- monotonous and routine tasks
- carpel tunnel syndrome, neck and back injuries, and muscle strains from physically repetitive actions (Baird & Baird, 2005, n.p.)
- negative or ineffective workplace cultures
- medically and psychologically unhealthy patrons
- homeless or mentally ill populations using the library as a shelter
- poor building design or maintenance
- substandard work facilities (Jordan, 2014, p. 294).

Emotional Labor. Within occupation groups, librarianship rates high as one requiring an extent of "emotional labor—or the work involved in managing one's own emotions" (Shuler & Morgan, 2013, p. 119), as well as the emotions of others. In their study entitled *Emotional Labor in Librarianship: A Research Agenda*, Matteson and

Miller (2012) noted that librarianship has long been concerned with the effect emotion management has on service quality. The profession, workplace organizational cultures, patron expectations, and societal and generational norms dictate the need for regulating emotions on-the-job. Professional norms in each area of librarianship suggest that librarians should express positive emotions and suppress negative ones (Matteson & Miller, 2012, p. 55). Matteson and Miller (2012) noted that specific organizational emotional requirements are prevalent within the profession. Difficult situations within the library setting, and organizationally imposed ideals for expressing emotions, frequently account for feelings of job discontentment, burnout, and emotional exhaustion (p. 60).Technology advancements, and new communication mechanisms for the Internet generation, have added stressors between the library worker and customer service. Emotional labor exists not only in face-to-face contacts, but also through the written word within the virtual environment such as in electronic reference and live chats, webinars, and email communications (Matteson & Miller, 2012, p. 177).

Shuler and Morgan (2013) noted in their study entitled *Emotional Labor in the Academic Library: When Being Friendly Feels Like Work,* that "emotional labor is the work one does to induce or suppress feelings to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others" (p. 120). Emotional labor is involved when, masking their own personal feelings, librarians strive to produce a positive emotional state within the library. Consequently, appropriate organizational codes of conduct, and feeling or display rules, become stressed.

The repression of natural reactions and emotions contributes to organizational and emotional exhaustion, and is often contagious (Vijayakumar & Remy, 2013, p. 234). Feeling as though it is an individual problem, librarians frequently hide symptoms of stress and burnout until these symptoms affect their immediate environment (Jordan, 2014, p. 303). In her paper entitled *Taking Care of Yourself: Stress and the Librarian*, Spencer (2013) noted that although there is no cure-all for workplace stress, the toll on an individual could be life-threatening (p. 12). Citing from a 2010 American Psychological Association Practice Organization report entitled *Psychologically Healthy Workplace Program Fact Sheet: By the Numbers*, Spencer (2013) quoted these alarming statistics from within the general working population:

- 69% of employees report that work is a significant source of stress
- 41% state that they typically feel tense or stressed during the workday
- 51% of employees state they are less productive at work as a result of stress
- 52% report they have considered "looking for a new job, declining a promotion, or leaving the job based on workplace stress" (p. 12)

Emotional labor is often a contradictory self-discipline that predisposes the burnout factor. The extent of this labor can lower job satisfaction and create job burnout. Outcomes can range from poor customer service to quitting a job. As a profession that relies heavily on relationships and stakeholders, emotional conflict is frequently a daily occurrence for librarians. Working with colleagues, teams, students, and the public presents many different types of emotional labor conditions. In their 2012 research agenda, Matteson and Miller defined and discussed two fundamental points:

- "Librarianship, with its frequent interpersonal interactions and strong emphasis on customer service, requires significant emotional labor" (p. 181), and
- "Research on emotional labor from other occupation groups shows that individuals differ in their abilities to perform emotional labor, and that there are both positive and negative individual and organizational outcomes from emotional labor" (p. 181).

Shuler and Morgan (2013) noted, that "[a]lthough librarians are expected to perform emotional labor, they are neither formally trained to do so nor materially valued for their skills . . ." (p. 130).

Task 2: A discussion of possible solutions. Although there can be positive outcomes associated with emotional labor, this research report deals only with those that affect the individual and the workplace negatively. The following discussion identifies traditional and current solutions to job stress and emotional labor issues reviewed in **Task 1**. They are:

- *Self-examination* – attempting to address the direct cause of a problem by defining what you did to promote it, or can do to change it
- *Coping Strategies* – ignoring a patron's emotional state and focusing on the reference problem only
- *Resisting* – walking away from a patron in an unresolvable, difficult interaction
- *Pro-active Solutions* – establishing on-the-job personal and organizational support
- *Managerial Contributions* and *Organizational Strategies* – attempting to reduce stressors and emotional labor in the workplace through education and action

Specific Strategies. Older how-to literature suggests that personal *Self-examination* may aid in dispelling burnout tendencies, but puts much of the emphasis on "librarian-as-trigger." *Coping Strategies* appear to be effective when dealing with specific emotional incidents in the library setting, such as upset or difficult patrons. Recent *Pro-active Solutions*, using decision-making and action-based strategies for managing occupational stress, offers useful suggestions. However, because of the need for managerial ororganizational buy-in, these suggestions cannot address the full extent of the problem. As a solution for confronting an emotionally demanding circumstance on-the-job,

Resisting is not only a last resort in relationship/emotion management, but may unfortunately occasionally be necessary. *Managerial Contributions* and *Organizational Strategies* appear to be preferred solutions that have the potential for addressing the full issue. Pairing the *Pro-active Solutions*, *Managerial Contributions* and *Organizational Strategies* may provide the greatest extent of coverage and an opportunity to constructively reduce or eliminate unnecessary stressors. If applied through leadership, these suggestions will potentially teach librarians to deal with the emotional aspects of the profession, defeat negative workplace cultures, and address individual and organizational passion deficits.

The following discussion reveals whether or not these specific strategies met any of the measurable criteria, which included:

- those that showed a *Success Rate*
- those that were transferrable across hierarchies and easily initiated (*Effectiveness*)
- those that presented some form of *Health Benefit*
- those that were *Cost* effective

Self-examination **and** *Resisting.* These techniques have no definable *Success Rate* noted in the literature, and may not be effective because each suggest a "What if . . ." aftermath to any workplace stressor. For this reason, applying these techniques individually or organizationally may add to personal and organizational stress levels. Although each of these solutions would *Cost* nothing to implement, attempting them would leave an individual wondering if he or she had done the right thing, and administrators wondering if remediation was required. As a result, *Effectiveness* and *Health Benefits* would not be met.

Coping Strategies. These strategies have the potential for being very effective in confrontational situations between librarian and patron. Implementing these techniques would eventually result in automatic *Effectiveness* and *Health Benefits* because personal interactions would improve. There would be no *Cost* associated with employing these *Coping Strategies*. *Success Rate* cannot be determined, however, because it is not addressed in the literature.

Pro-active Solutions. Each of these solutions establishes on-the-job support, such as through flexible work schedules or transferring within an organization, and offers the greatest potential for successful implementation within the workplace. Although there are no studies to identify measurable *Success Rates,* related issues that affect the criterion of *Effectiveness* would nonetheless have the greatest reach across hierarchies and library cultures. *Health Benefits* would certainly include stress reduction because emotional labor would be reduced over the long-term. There would be no *Cost* associated with employing these solutions.

Managerial Contributions **and** *Organizational Strategies.* These options go together in producing a workplace environment that combats organizational stress, and the effects of negative emotional labor. Identifying *Costs* for this type of training is beyond the scope of this

report; however, these solutions can be seamlessly promoted through library science curriculum, seminars offered through library associations at conferences, or classes conducted through managerial organizations within the academic community or public sector. Through effective leadership, these strategies are easily applied within the workplace, and transferred across all areas of librarianship and managerial hierarchies. Learning these skills, and conveying this knowledge, responds to the criterion of *Effectiveness* and contributes profoundly to the criterion of *Health Benefits*. Although *Success Rates* are not determinable at this time, this information should lead administrators and employees to develop positive organizational cultures, and recognize the symptoms of stress in order to counteract negative emotional labor indicators that lead to a passion deficit.

Task 3: Measured and compared solutions using standards for assessment.

Table 1: *Weighted Decision Matrix Comparison Chart*

Criteria	Effectiveness	Health Benefit	Cost	
Weight →	5	5	3	
↓ Options	Scores			
Self-Examination	1	1	0	2
Coping Strategies	5	4	0	9
Pro-active Solutions	5	5	0	10
Managerial Contributions	5	5	?	10
Resisting	1	1	0	2
Organizational Strategies	4	4	?	8

Note. Christian, L. A. (2014). *A Passion Deficit: Occupational Burnout and the New Librarian: A Recommendation Report*

Conclusions

It has been the goal of this report to respond to this research question: "What are the best solutions for preventing occupational burnout in librarianship?" Based on a literature review of current studies (**Task 1**), solutions were identified, compared for efficacy, and weighed against four criteria (**Tasks 2** and **3**). These conclusions contain a discussion concerning the need for **emotional intelligence—**or the capacity to be aware of one's emotions, control those emotions, and successfully navigate the social environment. In the service professions, this involves making decisions that achieve positive results, and creating constructive rapport that ensures desired responses. The lack of effective emotional intelligence on-the-job is a precursor for burnout; however, emotional intelligence consists of a "flexible set of skills that can be acquired and improved with practice" (TalentSmart, 2014, n.p.)

Researchers Mastracci, Newman, and Guy (2010) explain that graduates in service-delivery programs that provide person-to-person services "often indicate that their training failed to adequately prepare them for the human processes involved in the administration and delivery of public services" (Abstract p. 123). In her 2014 research study entitled *All Stressed Out, But Does Anyone Notice? Stressors Affecting Public Libraries*, Jordan stated that "[w]hen stress continues unabated, unrecognized and untreated, eventually librarians will burn out . . . . Once a librarian reaches burnout, many symptoms of stress have been overlooked or ignored" (p. 305). This recommendation report concludes that an important goal of every library administrator, professional association, and library school should be to address the reality of the demands of the workplace. Recommendations noted here will help deal with stressful workplace situations before they become debilitating, not only to individual library staff members, but also to the entire organization. Dealing pro-actively with staff morale reduces staff turnover.

 "Emotional labor skills are at the heart of service delivery . . ." (Mastracci, Newman, and Guy, 2010, 132); however, public engagement involves both technical (cognitive) knowledge as well as emotion skills. Personal competence includes an ability to stay aware of one's own emotions, as well as managing one's behavior and tendencies. The emotional gap between exhibiting true emotions and artificial responses creates personal stress. Research reveals an obvious need to reduce or eliminate specific occupational stressors; however, for stressors that cannot be eliminated the development of training programs to assist librarians in handling negative emotional labor is indispensable. Library schools and workplace training ordinarily do not address issues involving emotion work, and therefore do not prepare library students and staff for associated problems in the field. A librarian's professional development should reflect an understanding of emotional labor, skilled relationship building techniques, and an acquired emotional intelligence.

Some stressful conditions are improved by developing personal solutions that enhance one's personal resources—

"that is, attention to physical, social and emotional health" (Vijayakumar & Remy, 2013, p. 235); however, burnout is not a condition that reverses itself quickly or easily. While some have said the antidote to burnout is engagement, library science literature noted in this report frequently offers other suggestions. Reflecting an understanding of emotional labor in library policies, eliminating particular stressors on-the-job, and training librarians to be aware of not only their own emotions but also those of others will stop low morale from spreading, improve occupational performance, and help to retain healthy, happy employees. Research notes that stress reduction strategies result in an acceleration of performance and efficacy in the workplace. Recognition of the emotion work involved in the daily life of a librarian will aid the librarian to manage his or her emotions, and better serve patrons. Pro-active solutions will reverse the symptoms of a passion deficit.

This report has attempted to provide useful information based on the literature to manage emotional stress in the library workplace. Understanding the level of stressful activities accomplished daily, learning strategies for reducing those stressors, and developing individual stress management techniques are the goals of the following recommendations. This knowledge will significantly lead to healthier work environments, effective managers, and happier librarians.

Task 4: Recommendations

Although the *Success Rates* of the following preferred recommendations are not available in the literature, *Effectiveness* will be directly evident (organizationally) if an administrator provides this information to staff. Through a perceived satisfaction, *Health Benefits* will be noted easily and promptly by measuring lost workdays or lost employees (those that quit their jobs). There are no direct *Costs* associated with any of these recommendations; although, it would be the responsibility of an administrator to obtain appropriate training in specific skills in order to lead staff effectually. Individuals can effortlessly apply some of these techniques personally.

Recommendation 1

Instructors in schools of Library and Information Science generally do not address the essential component of person-to-person interaction skills when training students. Students possess technical (cognitive) knowledge, but are not equipped for demonstrating emotion skills necessary in the field. Students should be prepared for the realities of dealing with the public, and armed with the skills to combat negative emotional labor side effects. Wide-ranging coursework needs to reflect an understanding of on-the-job emotional labor. Emotional intelligence abilities need to be taught in the classroom, and should encompass the idea of "service" by teaching students how to

- communicate across geographic, cultural, societal and jurisdictional boundaries
- develop rapport, acquire relationship-building skills and promote connectedness

- reflect a caring and responsive attitude (Mastracci, Newman, & Guy, 2009, p. 131)

To prepare the New Librarian for twenty-first century public service, these issues can be addressed in every library science program when teaching courses that focus on organizational dynamics, such as administration and management. Content should include:

- defining and explaining emotional labor and the performance of emotion work
- allowing students to discover their own communication style to understand how they will respond to emotional labor
- teaching necessary skills that lead to emotional intelligence
- targeting the warning signs of burnout and positive techniques for mastering it (Mastracci, Newman, & Guy, 2009, p. 134-136)

Recommendation 2

Librarians in the workplace benefit from understanding the impact and effect that emotional labor has on personal and professional performance. Successful managers should provide support to staff as an aid for dealing with problems associated with occupational stress. To accomplish this, administrators should provide specific services to their employees, such as:

- **An established employee orientation program.** This type of program helps all library professionals form a solid foundation in the workplace. It should clearly define organizational goals, organizational planning, and encourage open communication.
- **Learning opportunities.** Keeping the minds of library employees actively engaged can decrease the possibility that burnout will set-in. Opportunities for professional education, staff training, and in-house innovation should be a priority.
- **Allowing employees to get involved in decision-making.** This will keep library employees engaged with the organization and institutional culture. Collaboration and cross-departmental team efforts should be encouraged and created.
- **A healthy opportunity to vent.** Releasing tension is one way to keep it from permeating the library. Allocated areas or break rooms for "time-off" during work hours should be offered.
- **Keeping the workplace fun.** Organizational activities that keep work interesting and less stressful need to be incorporated into the work environment. Time working at tasks that are labor intensive, or emotionally intensive, should be limited. A rearranged workday will keep duties that are not necessary at a minimum.
- **Enhancing personal resources**. Employees should be encouraged to take breaks, vacation

days and sick leave (Vijayakumar & Remy, 2013, p. 235).

Recommendation 3

Dealing with the long-term demands and consequences of emotional labor should include introducing specific strategies to combat burnout. This list suggests what administrators can effectively communicate to their employees, and implement on-the-job across all hierarchies, to instill emotional intelligence skills.

- **Teach display rules.** These are organizational rules or standards for responding to any patron or issue. Teaching display rules, like an emergency response checklist, can be easily performed in manageable doses at regular staff meetings.

- **Teach emotional intelligence.** This involves the ability to recognize emotions expressed by patrons and co-workers as a way to reduce the burden of emotional labor on an employee. This training can help reduce the likelihood of chronic emotional conflict that leads to emotional exhaustion.

- **Staff assistance programs.** Organizations and administrators can offer access to stress management and emotional health services that recognize the demands placed upon service sector providers.

- **Practice Buffering.** Posting a "greeter" at the door (volunteer or Friends of the Library member), as "front-end personnel" and a trained strategist, can help diffuse potentially troublesome issues by directing problems to the person with the skills and abilities to meet the immediate need (Mind Tools, 2014, n.p.).

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Glossary

Burnout: a prolonged response to the chronic exposure of a variety of stressors. In professional fields and athletics it is referred to as a "passion deficit." It is a disabling reaction to an overload of stress. Having no "passion" for a job often overflows into every aspect of one's life and may contribute to a lack of energy, or a general loss of interest. Symptoms fluctuate between absenteeism; major health problems such as nausea, weight gain, and insomnia; or emotional health issues involving detachment, feelings of isolation, and an inability to concentrate (Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine, 2008, n.p. as cited in The Free Dictionary; Dictionary for Sport and Exercise Science and Medicine, 2008, n.p. as cited in The Free Dictionary; Mind Tools, 2014, n.p.).

Display rules: rules for expressing emotions that an institution or organization requires for on-the-job interactions. It involves a group's norms, which define how and in what manner emotions are expressed corporately (Mind Tools, 2014, n.p.).

Emotional dissonance: negative feelings that develop when an individual views his or her emotions in conflict with his or her identity. It involves a struggle between experienced emotions and expressed emotions. Emotional dissonance often results in job dissatisfaction, and reduced organizational commitment (Education Portal, 2014, n.p.; Mind Tools, 2014, n.p.).

Emotional intelligence (EI): social awareness and relationship management skills that include the ability to understand moods, behaviors, and motives. Possessing these skills improves the quality of relationship building by understanding the way people feel, which allows for effective relationship management. Emotional intelligence is as important to professional success as technical abilities, and contributes to lower staff turnover (Mind Tools, 2014, n.p.). Positive emotional intelligence strategies can be taught and include self-awareness; self-management; social awareness; and relationship management (TalentSmart, 2014, n.p.).

Emotional labor (EL): sometimes referred to as "emotion work" or "emotion management," emotional labor explains emotional events in the workplace. Defined by Arlie Hochschild in her book *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling* (1983), it is a "discussion of work roles that requires individuals to display emotions consistent with organizational goals" (as cited in Julien & Genuis, 2009, p. 932). Emotional labor is "the awareness of the emotional expressions required of a job" (as cited in Matteson & Miller, 2012, p. 176). It is a venue for describing what service workers do that go beyond physical or mental duties, such as showing a genuine concern for the needs of others, smiling and making positive eye contact. These types of activities, when considered essential to worker performance, constitute emotional labor (Mind Tools, 2014, n.p.). "Emotional labor occurs when workers are paid, in part, to manage and control their emotions" (Mind Tools, 2014, n.p.).The invisibility of emotional labor profoundly contributes to a negative occupational affect. Library workers are more likely to regulate their emotions to comply with organizational demands, frequently leading to emotional dissonance. Forms of emotional labor include:

- *Surface acting.* This involves faking or pretending an affective display of emotion. As a means to conform to organizational rules to keep a job, an employee puts on a façade as if they are actually feeling the emotions they display. Surface acting is frequently associated with "increased stress, emotional exhaustion, depression, and a sense of inauthenticity" (Mind Tools, 2014, n.p.).

- *Deep acting.* This involves modifying one's feelings to match what an organization requires. This is based on an attempt by an employee to appear authentic to an audience (Mind Tools, 2014, n.p.).

- *Emotion regulation.* This refers to the "conscious or non-conscious control of emotion, mood, or affect" (Education Portal, 2014, n.p.). It is the process of modifying one's emotions to fit a social or organizational structure. There are two kinds of emotion regulation processes:

  - *Antecedent-focused emotion regulation*, which involves modifying emotions by changing the situation, or the way one feels about a situation, and
  - *Response-focused emotional regulation*, which involves modifying behaviors by suppressing, faking or amplifying a response (Mind Tools, 2014, n.p.).

Stress: a state of mental or emotional strain exerted upon an individual through demanding or difficult circumstances. It is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that "demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize" (Richard S. Lazarus as cited in Mind Tools, 2014, n.p.). Stress can result from any situation or experience that makes an individual feel frustrated, angry, nervous or anxious, and can cause severe health problems (Mind Tools, 2014, n.p.). The word **Stressor** refers to anything that provokes a stress response.

Online Resources

Burnout Self-Inventory

American Institute for Preventive Medicine. (2001). *Burnout self-inventory*: *Systematic stress management: The proven way to relax.* Retrieved from
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Coping Strategies and Stress Management

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Mind Tools: Essential Skills for an Excellent Career. (2014). *Stress management techniques by category*. Retrieved from
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Preventing Burnout

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