



PUBLIC RELATION ACTIVITIES AND DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP SKILLS FOR LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS

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ABSTRACT

Library public relations include ongoing activities to ensure the library has a strong public image. Great public relations can substantially accelerate library's development cycle and increase user awareness and help promote rapid growth. Librarianship is important to society. Library professional will regenerate our professional identities, attract talented colleagues, built great teams, inspire leadership and continually develop. Professional associations are excellent venues to hone leadership skills and the professional needs strong leader in hard time. As a librarian leader of library must have some leadership qualities which are helping in good public relation activities. Present paper try to explain relation between public relation activities and leadership skills for library professionals.

Keyword – Public relations Leadership skills, Leadership qualities .

INTRODUCTION :

Public relation is a management function of continuing and planned character. Private organization such as a library seek to win and retain the understanding, sympathy and support of those whom they are may be concerned. Library public relation is a deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between the library and publics. PR activities help to provide a coordinated efforts to communicate a positive image of the library. It also promotes the availability of library's materials programs and services. According to Dosworth, university libraries assists the universities in the discharge of their functions by acquiring all relevant information sources necessary for sustaining teaching, learning, research and public services functions of their universities. Any library activity directly or indirectly is an act of public relations in as much as it is don e to promote the library image and use.

Librarianship is important to society, although in so called information society there is not adequate recognition of it as professional work. They need to apply the differently, rethinking their professional identities reforming organization re-imaging their potential and opening their heart and minds. In these way library professionals will built great teams, inspire leadership and continually develop.

Public relation activities in academic libraries :

Public relation is a management tool that is increasingly becoming important in management of library, whether private or public. It is an essential element in communication system that enables individuals to be informed on many aspects of subjects that effects their lives.

According to Aitufe public relations is defines as management functions which evaluate public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an individual or an organization with public interest and executes an understanding and acceptance. Public relation uses four principal methods to communicate the public like advertising, lobbying, publicity and press agents etc. Libraries are utilizing interactive social media such as blogs, twitter and facebook as tool in their public relation campaigns. Social media allows the library to engage in two way communication and receive immediate feedback.

Importance of public Relations in Academic Libraries :

The prime aim of any academic library is to satisfy it's users by providing materials to meet their educational, research, information and recreational needs. The library cannot achieve these aims without good will and co-operation of it's publics. Thus the library needs public relations in it's effort to achieve it's aims. Therefore high quality book quality, book stock supplemented by personal contacts through public relations is a necessary requirements. The importance of public relations in academic libraries are as fallows

- 1) PR influences and create confidence for library services.
- 2) PR helps in opening up the World of books and knowledge and helps to make better contact between the library staff and the users.
- 3) PR bring about co-operation among professional colleagues creating a sense of oneness thereby improving relationship.
- 4) PR helps to make better contact between the librarians and users , this give the librarian opportunity to create good image of library.
- 5) In academic institution there is a tenancy for people especially students to be stuck in grooves and become dull and lazy about the academic work.
- 6) PR helps to keep tab on the external environment so as to gather outside opinions comments and pass on this information to the library management for possible consideration.
- 7) PR helps to keep the various public informed about policy functions and services of the library as well increase the staff knowledge and understanding.
- 8) Good PR will help librarians get more support from their parent organizations and the public in terms of personnel, budget and acuirements.
- 9) PR will help to publicize and market the functions and services of the library.
- 10) PR should change what people formely thought of library by improving our services and communication with readers in order to enlargethe libraries influence within society.

There is need for increased interest in public relations in libraries generally especially academic library. It will help to establish the library image and position within the academic community.

Developing Leadership Skills For Library Professionals :

21st Century librarians needs to remember always that we deal in information and that our skill lie in making information available through time and across borders. Our success in building the international bibliographic network has cut us off from the broader World of information which has developed so dramatically, especially over the last decades since the invention of WWW. There are some proposals for repositioning the profession through identification of different drawbacks which have been grouped into areas in order to be able to design the appropriate strategies are as fallows

- 1) Improve Libraries
- 2) Enhance professional profiles
- 3) advocate for the field
- 4) Recruit to the profession

At the present time, the library profession and it's organization are facing tremendous challenges within the workplace and within organizations. Professional Associations are excellent venues to hone leadership skill and the professional needs strong leaders in hard times.

Leadership is not management. In a volume of essays on library leadership Michale Gorman wrote- “ The essential difference between management on the one hand and leadership on the other that the former is concerned with What is and latter is concerned with What will be. He finishes with the manage strives to make the returns of current system as great as possible where as the leader seeks better alternatives to current system. Defining leadership is no simple task because of it's many facets. Since we are discussing leadership in professional organization role and the components of that role in helping us understand and develop our leadership skills. Like so much else in the information profession leadership style are being forced to change meet the demands of technological innovation. There are some initiatives for leadership which are desirable and found rewarding are as below

- 1) Creation of awareness for need of leadership development skill among professional
- 2) Self Development in leadership skill by librarians and information professional
- 3) Integration of leadership development in the library and information centre strategy planning.
- 4) Leadership development program to run through the ladder (from top to Bottom)
- 5) Library and information schools to integrate leadership skills development into their curricula
- 6) Need for librarians and information professionals to maintain strong network within and without their organization to enhance development skilla and knowledge.

Carol A. Brey Casino expressed leadership qualities for future library leaders. They suggested 10 steps to bring library leader are as fallows

- 1) Find a good mentor
- 2) Learn How to follow first
- 3) Be Visionary
- 4) Be a good servant
- 5) Take risks
- 6) Take care of yourself

- 7) Maintain positive attitude
- 8) Never turn down a leadership position
- 9) Learn how to motivate people effectively
- 10) Keep your sense of humor

Great Leaders are the one who care about the people around them. As librarians, we have the opportunity to shape the future of our profession one life at time.

CONCLUSION :

Libraries are service organization. At present time users have different types of pin pointed information. Library professionals can meet their all types of demand when they know about user's interest to get information in right time and in right way. For this purpose public relation activities are very important specially in academic libraries. PR will help to establish the library's image position within the academic community. Some leadership qualities enhance the public relation activities. Leadership must based on goodwill. Goodwill does not mean posturing and least of all pondering to mob. It means obvious and whole hearted commitment to helping followers and change the future of libraries.

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