



# Management and Leadership Training in Massachusetts Libraries: Report

*A note about this report:*

*In the spring of 2019 MLS Consulting and Training Team members Amanda Fauver (Membership Manager) and Christi Showman Farrar (Consultant) were assigned the task of researching and evaluating the need for management training within the library community. After a year of gathering data, researching, and talking to our membership we present this final report.*

*Thank you!*

*Amanda and Christi*

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## Executive Summary

### A. Competencies

The following competencies are based on feedback collected from our members. Topics suggested and discussed with members throughout this process were sorted and combined into seven groups.

## Essential Competencies for Library Leadership

Competency	Description
People Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands and complies with employment laws and regulations that impact performance management.</li> <li>• Understands and ensures compliance with human resources policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Resolves conflict and establishes practices for open communication.</li> <li>• Understands and cultivates emotional intelligence.</li> <li>• Supports and advocates for staff's continued professional development.</li> </ul>
Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands the political process on the local and state level, communicates library's value, advocates for local policy and funding to support the library.</li> <li>• Builds support and partners within the local community.</li> </ul>
Workplace Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands the dynamics of interpersonal relationships.</li> <li>• Uses team building skills to create a collaborative and supportive workplace. Acts as mentor and/or coach.</li> </ul>
Marketing and Public Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands the fundamental practices of Marketing.</li> <li>• Develops and promotes the library's vision. Crafts promotional strategy.</li> <li>• Understands tools available to engage target audiences.</li> <li>• Uses marketing practices to engage supporters and advocate on behalf of the library.</li> <li>• Provides leadership through public challenges of library policy and/or collection.</li> </ul>
Project Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectively manages people, resources, and time through the project life cycle.</li> <li>• Understands how to write goals and evaluate their success.</li> </ul>

Future Readiness

- Follows emerging trends in the Library community. Acts as an agent of change.
- Supports innovation, flexibility, and a community prepared to take risks and to learn from failure.
- Provides support and guidance in both succession planning and knowledge management.

Resource Management

- Understands budget development and management.
- Understands best practices for maintaining facilities and collections.
- Understands the basics of contracts and negotiation.

## B. Methodology & Conclusions

The methodology for this report focused almost entirely on qualitative research methods, with some quantitative data informing our findings. The main methods used were:

- Open-ended survey
- Focus group
- Crowd-sourced open response
- Interviews
- Landscape review – of free, paid, and degree-program offerings in the topic areas

Once data-gathering was complete for each method, our team employed analysis strategies such as affinity-mapping and card-sorting to identify trends and themes among the data. We utilized approaches taught by user experience experts such as Courtney Greene McDonald, Andy Priestner, Amanda Etches, and Aaron Schmidt, as well as techniques that Christi Farrar brought to MLS from previous experience in the field. Our analysis directly resulted in the “Essential Competencies for Library Management” seen above.

We have determined that this is a core group of competencies that library staff need in order to be successful and confident managers. Most of the skills can be loosely grouped into successful organization and management of “people” and “things”, with a broader classification that can be seen above in the competency chart. Massachusetts Library System (MLS) is an ideal source of training for *some* of these skills, whereas there are other resources available that are better suited to meeting the needs of library staff (e.g. MA Municipal Association is a stronger resource for governmental and municipal topics.) To this end, we feel that MLS is in the position to create a core set of learning opportunities – in-person and virtual training, plus resources – that library managers can take/utilize to ensure that they meet the management competencies. This core learning should focus on areas that cannot be easily learned elsewhere via organizations and programs already in existence. However, this is not to say that some overlap cannot occur. The development of MLS training in leadership/management competencies should draw from the needs of our members, while maintaining consideration for resources, capacity, and ease of use.



Burn Out	18
Coaching and Mentoring	18
Change Management	15
Communication	14
Confidence/Imposter Syndrome	12
Trust	10
Ageism	9
Buy in	9
Career Transitions	9
DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion)	3

The full responses can be reviewed in the Appendix.

### C. Focus Group

One focus group was held at our MLS Office in Northampton on Monday September 23, 2019 from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM. Ten individuals were invited six attended.

This discussion focused on obtaining more constructive information about the Management and Leadership training needs of our members. We did this using structured questions and activities. Participants shared their struggles as managers and leaders.

Participants agreed that many of their current struggles as managers fall into one of two categories – “People Management vs. Money Management”. Some common threads that participants had struggled with included issues like navigating governance and the politics of funding, hiring practices and protocol (HR practices), onboarding new staff, building a strong network of peers, finding opportunities to discuss shared struggles, finding a mentor and/or creating an internal mentoring system, board management including changing and educating board members.

One attendee noted that there is “a huge gap between library school and getting into management (eg. Basic Accounting). Library school has lots of info about libraries but nothing about management or teaching. Best training was on the job. Library work isn’t just about collection development, but also business administration.”

The full notes from this focus group are available in the Appendix.

### D. Director Interviews

Amanda Fauver performed a handful of director interviews in the Summer of 2019. One with the Director and Assistant Director of a large public library. The second with the director of a small public library.

### Notes from a Large Public Library

During Amanda's interview the Director and Assistant Director shared that the Senior Managers at their library are still growing and would benefit from coaching or committee work. The committee work would help build desirable skills that don't currently fit within some staff members current job descriptions. Managers need the experience and rigor of doing the work and in some instances the only way to obtain that experience is through volunteer committee work. They identified five areas where their staff need to develop skills- analytics, evaluation, thoughtful meeting design, basic management (ie. budgeting, employee management, etc.) and project management.

They believe that many programs that are offered now stress the teaching vs. the doing, they want to see more project-based work. This library would like to focus on leadership development. They need someone to articulate pathways for library leadership. They believe Coaching or cohort experiences like Project SET would be ideal but it would take too long for them to get the number of staff members they need to develop these skills through the program (due to the small size of the cohorts). They noted that there is a wide knowledge gap between the Senior Managers and the next step up which in this library would be the Assistant Director position. They believe MA needs a stronger "Leadership Pipeline".

From the MA Library organizations, they would like to see more visionary leadership from the top. Would like to see more high-level talks and symposiums focused on big picture issues.

They are supportive of staff pursuing training opportunities but need them to take the initiative of finding the opportunity and bringing it to them. They don't consider travel to be an issue. Culture left over from the former leadership may have caused staff to be hesitant or fearful of approaching them with new ideas and projects.

### Notes from a Small Public Library

During Amanda's interview the Director shared that they have been struggling to understand Town politics and structure in their new role. When asked about their prior education on the topic of management they had a vague memory of learning some management techniques in library school but noted the long-time gap between their education and its real-world application.

Budgeting was one topic that was new to this director and one they need more training/experience with. They are also looking for a refresher on business skills and facility up keep. One topic they received training on from their municipality was open meeting training which they have found very useful.

As a manager this director is encouraging their staff to attend Network meetings in order to build connections outside the library and develop new skills. They say staff seem reluctant to attend. They also do not seem to be aware of all the training opportunities available to them. This director believes their staff could benefit from public speaking training and experience as well as leadership training. One current issue for the director is that their assistant director is an extreme introvert and the director is looking for a way to help them become more comfortable doing extroverted activities.

This library is currently in transition from what the director has characterized as a restrictive culture. They are now struggling with transforming that culture into one of innovation. This director would like more education on how to manage change.

## E. Building Your Leadership Toolbox Event

On September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019 MLS held a one-day event at the Courtyard Marriott in Marlborough MA on the subject of leadership. In the evaluation forms we asked attendees to “Share a challenge that you or your library has faced that you wish you had been better prepared for”.

Although the comments were more general than we had hoped we still collected valuable insight into the management and leadership training needs of our membership. These comments were recorded and grouped using a card sort activity. This activity resulted in a grouping of four categories.

1. External communication- includes understanding the essentials of advocacy, promoting and marketing the libraries value and services, reaching non users.
2. Internal communication- includes teambuilding, breaking down silos, and building staff buy in.
3. Navigating municipalities and the politics of funding- includes understanding the intricacies of municipal government, explaining the value of the library to municipal stakeholders, and advocating for the library.
4. Managing and preparing for change- includes understanding the fundamentals of change management in order to implement change within the library, and also preparing for change by creating policies and procedures to guide the library through disasters and other emergencies.

## F. MLA Survey on Management

In the Fall of 2018 Kim Hewitt of the Waltham Public Library created and distributed a survey on the topic of Management and Leadership Training on behalf of the Massachusetts Library Association (MLA). The feedback has resulted in the formation of a new MLA committee – the Leadership and Management section.

Kim Hewitt shared the data collected in this survey with MLS. They had a total of 213 respondents. 37% of those responding identified as Directors. Of the library directors completing this survey 14% reported receiving formal training when they first entered their position, 53% received no training at all, and 33% received some form of informal training. When asked if they had planned to enter a library management role when they first joined the profession 57% answered NO.

MLA asked respondents to reflect on skills that would have been “useful/important” when they entered their leadership role. Responses focused on the areas of dealing with staff, money, and the physical library facility. More specific topics include leadership skills, basic accounting, statistics, knowledge of human resource practices, mediation, and advocacy skills.

When asked for additional comments on management and leadership training opportunities in the library profession two comments stood out-

*“When funding authorities respect the library director because they see the library is well managed and he/she is successful in making them aware of what the library does and the difference it makes*

*in the lives of residents, that makes a tremendous difference in whether the library is provided the resources it needs to grow, innovate and continue to provide quality services to residents.”*

*“People that are talented at their job are promoted to management roles and their skills don't necessarily translate to being a successful manager. This is both a hiring and professional development issue. Managers need help developing their skills and directors need help learning how to encourage and cultivate their staff.”*

## Education Landscape

### A. Graduate Programs

In Massachusetts there are two institutions offering graduate coursework in management specific to libraries – Simmons University and Salem State University. While there are numerous online programs offered by institutions outside of Massachusetts, we have chosen to keep the scope of this report to resources within the Commonwealth.

1. Simmons University - <https://www.simmons.edu/academics/colleges-schools-departments/schools-departments/slis>

In-person courses in both Boston and Western MA, plus online options. Degree offerings include Master's degree with concentrations in archives, school libraries, cultural management, and information science and technology; various post-master's certificates. There is also a “leadership and management” track that students can follow in the “design-your-own” curriculum path.

2. Salem State University - <https://www.salemstate.edu/academics/school-education/master-education-library-media-studies>

Online Master of Education program for school librarians that includes MA state teacher certification. One course is “Managing and Evaluating the School Library Program” and covers management topics included in our competencies, as well as provides a pre-practicum experience.

### B. Library Consortia

Each library consortia/network in Massachusetts offers a variety of training for their members. These range from software and process-specific trainings, like for ILS software or holds-management, to idea-sharing groups for specific populations. It does not look as though any network in MA offers a systematic training for library management or leadership, however.

## Career Outlook and Trends

### A. Competencies Research

We reviewed the professional competencies published by three major professional library organizations. The Public Library Association (PLA), Library Leadership & Management Association (LLAMA), and Webjunction (not updated since 2014).

#### **WebJunction** [<https://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/competencies.html>]

- |                                   |                                       |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Community Relations            | 7. Personnel Management               |
| 2. Facilities                     | 8. Project Management                 |
| 3. Financial Management           | 9. Staff Training and Development     |
| 4. Laws, Policies and Procedures  | 10. Strategic Planning                |
| 5. Marketing and Public Relations | 11. Trustees, Friends and Foundations |
| 6. Organizational Leadership      |                                       |

#### **LLAMA** [<http://www.ala.org/llama/leadership-and-management-competencies>]

- |                                   |                                     |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Communication skills           | 8. Conflict resolution (personnel)  |
| 2. Change management              | 9. Budget creation and presentation |
| 3. Team building (personnel)      | 10. Forward thinking                |
| 4. Collaboration and partnerships | 11. Critical thinking               |
| 5. Emotional intelligence         | 12. Ethics                          |
| 6. Problem solving                | 13. Project management              |
| 7. Evidence-based decision making | 14. Marketing and advocacy          |

#### **PLA – Theory of Change** [<http://www.ala.org/pla/education/theoryofchange>]

- |                                  |                                      |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Strategic Thinker/Planner     | 7. Champion of Public Library Values |
| 2. Community Liaison/Partner     | 8. Evaluator                         |
| 3. Community Leader              | 9. Champion of Outcome Measurement   |
| 4. Library Advocate              | 10. PLA Member                       |
| 5. Change Agent/ Pioneer         |                                      |
| 6. Steward of the Public Library |                                      |

### B. Career Outlook

According to the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics the employment of professional librarians is expected to see an average growth of 5% between 2019 – 2029. A majority of this growth is expected to result from career retirements and transitions out of the library profession. It's important to note that this data is pre COVID-19. It is currently unknown how the pandemic will impact job growth or if it will exacerbate retirements and leadership turnover rates.

<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/education-training-and-library/librarians.htm#tab-6>

## Market Forces

This section highlights some potential events and economic factors that may affect library operations and management in Massachusetts.

- COVID-19 – All Libraries have been or will be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
  - Managers and leaders will have to deal with the repercussions of shut downs, possible layoffs, budget cuts, policy changes, and the establishment of new policies and procedures to keep their staff and patrons safe during a pandemic.
  - New service models will also have long lasting impacts even after the pandemic's conclusion.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – According to the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics the library profession identifies as 79.9% female and 87.8% white. National conversations about equity and representation have emerged as one of the defining issues of 2020.
  - Managers and leaders need to reevaluate policies and practices from the wide array of lenses that make up a library's patron population. Improving representation of patron populations within the library staff, the board, and decision making committees will be an important part of improving services for these communities.
- MA Minimum Wage Increases - A gradual increase of minimum wage over the next several years to reach a minimum of \$15.00 by January 1, 2023. <https://www.mass.gov/doc/mw-opinion-02-13-02/download>
  - Municipal employees are excluded from the state minimum wage law. As a result, libraries may struggle to attract and keep employees in some roles.
- Censorship Bills and local challenges- One example of this recently occurred in Ludlow <https://www.masslive.com/news/2020/02/sex-is-a-funny-word-among-titles-causing-controversy-over-books-at-ludlow-middle-school-library.html>
  - These challenges require library leadership to be prepared with policy and procedure. They also present an opportunity for leaders to educate the public on the value of the library and to develop their advocacy efforts.
- American Library Association's (ALA) financial concerns- <http://www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2020/02/ala-responds-financial-situation>
  - With the future of ALA in question. The library community should brace for the potential loss of some important professional development opportunities. There could be a reduction in published materials on Library Specific issues from ALA Publishing, fewer opportunities to learn via ALA Webinars, or a decrease in opportunities to participate in national committees.

## Technology

Library managers and leaders will also need to be aware of ongoing changes in technology. Technology will offer more accessible ways to learn via online learning ranging from short tutorials on YouTube to full college level course work available on sites like [Coursera](https://www.coursera.org) and [edX](https://www.edx.org). These tools offer the MLS some opportunities in the area of continuing education. With our limited capacity we should consider these alternative learning methods as a supplemental resource.

An increase in the availability of data from electronic sources and online tools will increase the need for leaders to develop analysis skills. By familiarizing themselves with excel, Tableau, and tools like the open

source program RStudio libraries can both better understand how the community is using their library and build resources for use in their advocacy efforts.

This section was informed in part by the Center for the Future of Libraries a full list of trends relevant to libraries is available here- <http://www.ala.org/tools/future/trends>

## Internal Capabilities

In a review of the resources and tools offered by the Massachusetts Library System we identified the following sources as items that can or do support Managers and Leaders:

1. Basic Library Techniques
2. Professional Collection
3. Committee and Board Work
4. Mentoring (through Project SET)
5. LibGuides-
  - a. Sustainable Change Management
  - b. Time Management
  - c. Management and Supervisor Essentials
  - d. Evaluating Library Staff
  - e. Assessment
  - f. Strategic Planning for Libraries
  - g. Policy Collection

## SWOT Analysis

This SWOT examines the Massachusetts Library System and is not limited to just the Consulting and Training Services Team.

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connections and Partnerships</li> <li>• Training experience and expertise in instructional design</li> <li>• Established ability to offer training both in-person and online</li> <li>• Resources including digital tools- Zoom, Springshare products, etc.</li> <li>• Financial Resources (depending on what happens in FY21-FY22)</li> <li>• Our role within the library community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity- staff may already be over extended on other projects.</li> <li>• Time and availability to dedicate to a new project may be limited</li> </ul>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentoring</li> <li>• Committee Development</li> <li>• Networking opportunities like hosting roundtables or check-ins</li> <li>• Career planning and development services</li> <li>• Self-Guided learning plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncertainty under COVID-19 conditions</li> <li>• Financial Recession/Depression</li> </ul>

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## Other Training Opportunities Available to Library Workers

### *Mentoring Programs:*

- SustainRT Mentorship Program  
<http://www.ala.org/rt/sustainrt/> (No information on the website)
- Maxine Bleiweis  
[http://www.maxinebleiweis.com/Welcome\\_to\\_Maxine\\_Bleiweis.html](http://www.maxinebleiweis.com/Welcome_to_Maxine_Bleiweis.html)
- Women Leading Government Committee  
The Massachusetts Municipal Management Association established the Women Leading Government Committee as a formal committee in 2018. Its mission is to educate, mentor, encourage and support women in the local government profession. While its focus is to provide resources and support for women in municipal government or those interested in a career in local government, men are welcome and encouraged to participate. (Only events listed on MMA website)
- New England Library Leadership Symposium (NELLS)  
<http://nelib.org/connect/committees/new-england-library-leadership-symposium-nells/>
- Simmons Mentoring  
<https://www.simmons.edu/academics/colleges-schools-departments/schools-departments/slis/careers/mentors>

### *Certificate Programs:*

- Certificate in Library Leadership and Management

<http://libraryjuiceacademy.com/courses.php>

Six Four week courses.

1. Effective Communication Strategies
2. Planning and Leading Effective Team Meetings
3. Strategic Planning: Setting Directions for the Future
4. Critical Strategies for Implementing and Managing Organizational Change
5. Growing, Developing, and Retaining Dynamic Staff
6. Telling Your Story: Successful Marketing Strategies for Librarians

- Certified Public Library Administrator Program

<https://ala-apa.org/certification/>

Core Courses include- Budget and Finance, Management of Technology, Organization and Personnel Administration, Planning and Management of Buildings.

Electives include (3 of 5 required)- Current Issues, Marketing, Fundraising/Grantsmanship, Politics and Partnerships, and/or Serving Diverse Populations.

- Public Library Management (edX)  
<https://www.edx.org/professional-certificate/michiganx-public-library-management>

Eight courses from the University of Michigan

1. Identifying Community Needs for Public Library Management
2. Managing Diverse and Inclusive Workplace for Public Libraries
3. Personnel Management for Public Libraries
4. Budgeting and Finance for Public Libraries
5. Infrastructure Management for Public Libraries
6. Strategic Planning for Public Libraries
7. Grant Writing and Crowdfunding for Public Libraries
8. Public Library Marketing and Public Relations

- Leadership Certificate Programs (Cornell)  
<https://www.ecornell.com/certificates/leadership-and-strategic-management/#>

Offers 27 different certificate programs. All online

Leadership Essentials includes seven courses

1. Becoming a Powerful Leader Course
2. Building High-Performing Teams Course
3. Interpersonal Communication Skills Course
4. Managing Team Performance Course
5. Managing Time and Priorities Course
6. Effective Hiring and Interviewing Course
7. Addressing Workplace Behavior Issues Course

- MMA- Suffolk Certificate in Local Government Leadership & Management  
<https://www.mma.org/about-mma/services/mma-suffolk-certificate-in-local-government-leadership-management/>

A program designed exclusively for municipal employees interested in furthering their professional career in local government and pursuing a graduate degree. Taught by Suffolk Faculty and held on 25 Fridays (9-4, Sept-May)

#### *Training:*

- LLAMA Online Courses and Webinars  
<http://www.ala.org/llama/llama-online-courses-and-webinars>
- WebJunction  
<https://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics.html>
- Infopeople  
<https://infopeople.org/training>
- Wyoming State Library – Training Calendar  
<https://library.wyo.gov/services/training/calendar/>
- PLA

- Service Response Online Workbooks  
<http://www.ala.org/pla/education/onlinelearning/workbooks>
- In person and blended learning  
<http://www.ala.org/pla/education/inperson>
- Online Learning  
<http://www.ala.org/pla/education/onlinelearning>
  
- MIIA (Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association) part of MMA (Massachusetts Municipal Association)  
<https://www.emiia.org/risk-management-resources/training/2019/5>  
  
Our free onsite and online training programs help members keep up with municipal best practices in Leadership/Management, Safety/Technical, and Driver Training EVOC
  
- LinkedIn Leadership & Management Training  
<https://learning.linkedin.com/content-library/online-business-courses/leadership-and-management#leadership-management>  
Paths include-  
Managing Change  
Become a Leader  
Fostering Collaboration  
Fostering Innovation
  
- Fred Pryor Seminars- Management & Leadership Training  
<https://www.pryor.com/training-categories/management-supervision-leadership/#seminars>  
Various programs around the state.
  
- Harvard Business School Online  
<https://online.hbs.edu/courses/leadership-principles/>  
Leadership Principles, a six-week online course
  
- Care and Feeding of the REAL Boss: Working Effectively with City and County Officials  
<http://www.ala.org/pla/education/onlinelearning/webinars/ondemand/2013care>  
On Demand Webinar from PLA (2013)
  
- Supervisory Leadership Development Program  
<https://www.mma.org/members/mmhr/mmpa-sponsors-supervisory-leadership-development-program/>  
Six Day training program for municipal employees
  
- Leadership & Management Academy NYLA  
[https://www.nyla.org/max/4DCGI/cms/review.html?Action=CMS\\_Document&DocID=51&MenuKey=advocacy](https://www.nyla.org/max/4DCGI/cms/review.html?Action=CMS_Document&DocID=51&MenuKey=advocacy)  
For NY Librarians but something to examine further.

- NELS and NELS II (New England Library Leadership Symposium <http://nelib.org/connect/committees/new-england-library-leadership-symposium-nells/> five-day intensive training program is to foster the mentoring and development of leaders in state and regional library associations.

*Other Resources:*

MindTools <https://www.mindtools.com/>

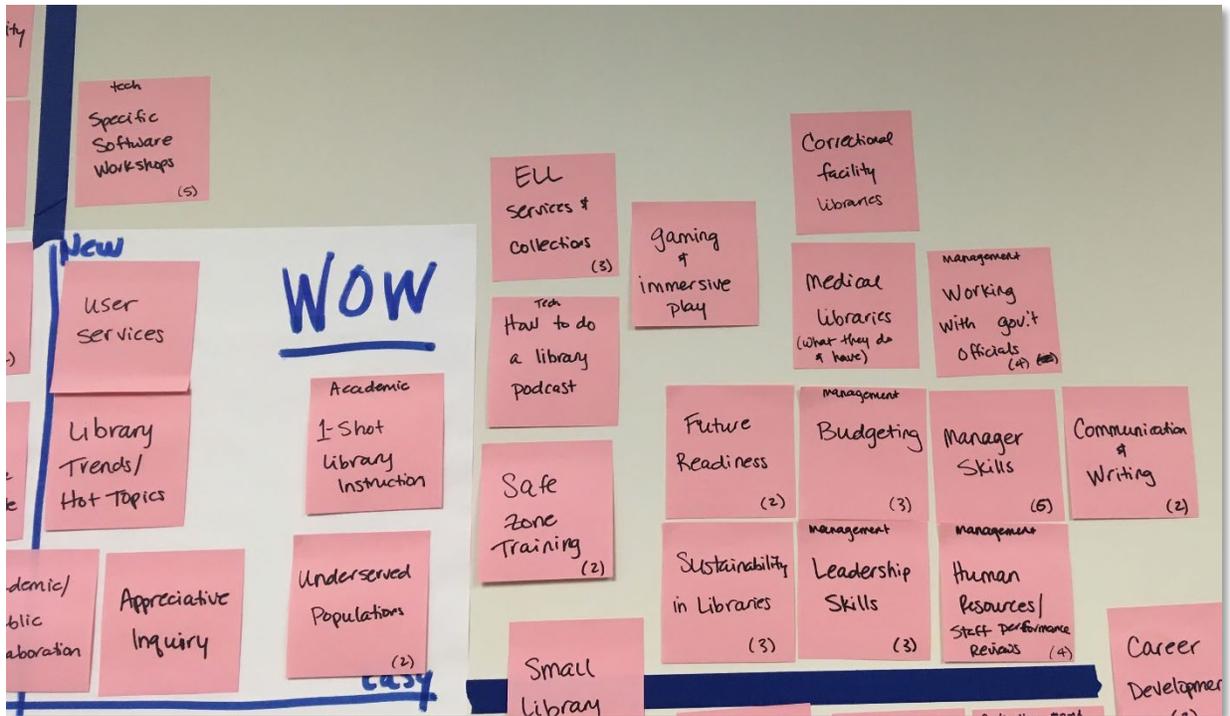
LLAMA New Professionals Toolkit <http://www.ala.org/llama/nps-toolkit>

PLA Theory of Change <http://www.ala.org/pla/education/theoryofchange>

MLS Continuing Education Call for Topics

Category	Total	
Academic libraries	3	
Basic library topics	3	
Collaborations	3	
Collection management	11	
Customer service	3	
Data	3	
Electronic resources	3	
Future readiness	5	
Management	34	
Marketing/PR	14	
Opioid crisis	4	
Organization skills	3	
Outreach	5	
Programming	4	
Readers' Advisory	4	
Roundtables	6	
Small libraries	3	
Social justice	7	
Social media	4	
Soft skills	7	
Space planning	3	
Specific patron populations	14	
STEAM	3	
Technology/software	15	
Wellness	6	
Youth Services	8	
	178	
Management	34	19%
Technology/software	15	8%
Marketing/PR	14	8%
Specific patron populations	14	
Collection management	11	

Consulting Teams How/Now/Wow activity-



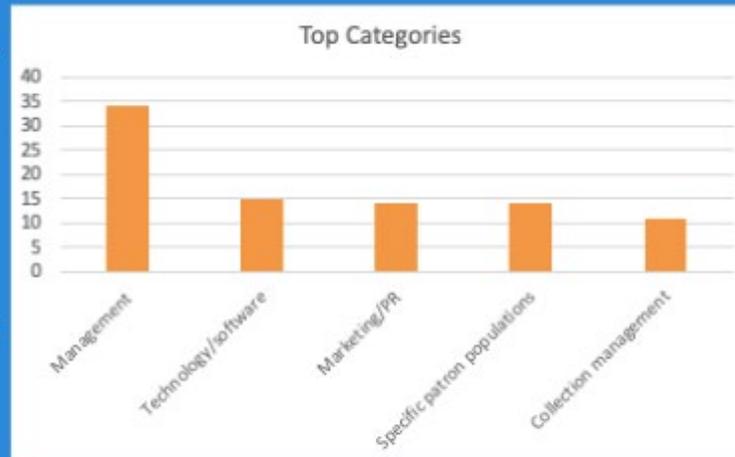
Massachusetts Library System  
Consulting & Training Services

# Call for Topics Survey Results

We asked and you answered! Here are some highlights from our 2018 Continuing Education Survey

**86**

Responses



**205**

Topic  
Ideas

**HOW**

### Great ideas that need some planning or additional resources

Linked data - Narcan training - Reference roundtables -  
First-year college students - Community engagement  
idea share - Library security - Tech petting zoo

### New ideas that we hope to implement soon

Sustainability - Appreciative Inquiry - HR for library  
managers - Census Bureau - Conflict resolution -  
Safe Zone training - Gaming and immersive play -  
Language-learning conversation groups

**WOW**

**NOW**

### Topics that MLS already provides

Space planning - STEAM programming - Strategic  
planning - Mindfulness - Customer service - Basic library  
techniques - Diverse collection development - Marketing

MLA 2019 Crowd sourcing data:

*Full data with category groupings are available in a separate document.*

Response	Seconded
Motivating Staff to change their thinking about "we've always done it that way"	
Communications, Communications, Communications	
Seeing technology as positive	
Getting buy in into policy	
Implementing policies and decisions made above my level that I don't agree with and my staff are angry about	
Being seen as a woman and therefore needing to be softer, indirect, etc.	
Finding the patience to wade through the meetings and endless process to get some things done	
Moving organizational culture forward in a positive direction	X
Buy in	
Not having an MLS	
Getting all staff on board	
Buy in	
Encouraging staff buy in and making everyone feel included & appreciated	X
Not being taken seriously b/c of a young age	XX
Effective Communication and Community guiding/expectations	
Feeling as though I've had to lie about my age to be taken seriously - imposter syndrome has me lying and saying I'm in my mid- 30's when I'm only in my late 20's	
Bringing existing staff to a place where they feel they could trust the New Administration (Director & Assistant Director)	
Overcoming Confidence Issues	X
Being confident in my decision and realizing that I can't please everyone & take everything on myself to keep everyone happy	X
Clearly communicating changes- not second guessing (imposter syndrome)	
Coaching defiant/burnout staff	
Speaking up + being confident and self-assured when facing a problem	
Gender Dynamics	
Resistance to change	
Building Trust	
Talking people into having fun	
Just became union rep for my library and am hoping I can serve my coworkers effectively and advocate for them well!	
Changing regions to statewide agency	
New boss with long time staff	X
Being taken seriously as a young woman in the profession	
Building trust within + across organization, esp. as change ensues	
Ageism - Too old, too young	

Motivating staff who are experiencing burnout  
 Inspiring Staff who are burnt out  
 Taking myself seriously  
 Helping staff to embrace change  
 Having confidence that people respect my leadership  
 Giving constructive criticism and having it stick X  
 micro-managing from director  
 lack of staff respect  
 over scheduling myself (to compensate for PT staff)  
 Convincing "older" people of "newer" ideas  
 Leading conversations about race and equity  
 finding a mentor who is not my boss  
 Building a more collaborative culture with big picture/strategic thinking  
 Taking on too much- not asking for help  
 Balancing roles  
 Bridging the responsibility gap- Town management, trustees, Director, Friends  
 Lack of staff support/desire  
 Micromanaging director! Limited views on what libraries are for & what they  
 can & should be doing. Patrons arise!!  
 Getting Support from other staff!  
 Time management  
 Avoiding burnout  
 Short staffed  
 Being taken seriously by higher leadership roles in the library  
 Learning to delegate. I don't need to do it all on my own  
 People not listening X  
 Interoffice Dynamics  
 Motivating Staff who may be disengaged or burnt out  
 Keeping staff motivated & engaged  
 Managing up  
 Change management  
 Managing people older than me X  
 Managing people who have been there longer than me  
 Supervising staff who used to be my peers  
 Avoiding mission creep  
 Trying to get experience  
 Slow to change  
 Managing/suggesting ideas to people who don't like or want change  
 Transition from co-worker to supervisor

Notes from Focus Group:

*September 23, 2019*

MGMT/Leadership Focus Group

Amanda's draft outline:

These notes are taken from direct quotes from focus group participants.

1. Intros

a. Who we are

b. Why we're here-

- Leaders need mgmt training, still learning, give schools a voice, new to role, communication is tricky, never had training on "mgmt. of the people", succession planning- always struggling with managing change. Finding struggles.
- Job has become more about management over the years – people management and money management. "Every day is a new challenge" – always a problem to solve. Governance and funding politics.
- Don't know how to on-board new people. Hiring practices and protocol.
- We're good at **responding** to change rather than being proactive. Environment can hinder change. Need to get out of our comfort zone. It's hard to find time to do it all.
- Need a strong network and time to network and have discussions.
- Mentoring would be helpful – within the library, within MA (note: UMass has a mentoring program)

2. 6-8-5 (post-it brainstorm to get everyone interacting)

a. When you think of "library management" what are the skills that come to mind?

- Multitasking
- Communication
- Ability and willingness to continually learn
- Ability to think big picture
- Good Communication skills
- People skills (besides communication, empathy, approachable)
- Ability to be respectful
- Confidence & Willingness to learn and admit mistakes and weaknesses
- Ability to problem solve
- Adaptable ability to change
- Understanding of budgeting and managing income/expenses
- Ability to take criticism and negative feedback
- Ability to persevere
- Multitasking
- Ability to make mistakes and admit them!
- Empathy
- Politics- City official, community members, shareholders, board members, lobbying
- People management staff and public evaluation
- Coaching- creating new leaders within staff

- Time management
  - Reports/statistics gathering
  - Programs/services planning (marketing)
  - Funding financial management
  - Roles
  - Respect
  - Prioritizing
  - Time
  - Boundaries
  - Supervising communication
  - Advocacy (for patron needs)
  - Communication
  - Educating others on importance of privacy
  - Evaluating Staff
  - Vision (why we do what we do, how to respond to changing communities, etc)
  - School Committee Advocacy
  - Supervision of staff (also training)
  - Input in budget process
  - Supporting your staff, building a team, support when patrons or admin challenges arise
  - Organization- making sure all of the things happen- marketing programs, coverage for the room/desks
  - Finding ways to keep people and resources safe and healthy in physical space
  - Gender diversity
  - Maintaining volunteer base
  - Supporting and creating a diverse community that feels like they belong
  - Public advocacy- communicating staffing and administrative needs beyond teaching
  - Anti-racism in larger library community
- b. When you think of “leadership” what are the skills that come to mind?
- c. What did you notice?
- Lots of overlap
  - Others mentioned issues that are shared but I had forgotten about
  - Interested in subversive techniques
  - Responsive but behind, how do we get ahead? Get out of comfort zone?
  - Restricted by environment- Unions and retirements
  - How to make staff feel more committed, establish accountability?
  - Building a strong network is really valuable, important to leave library and meet other librarians
  - Micromanagement
  - Team based leadership, when is it appropriate to include someone
  - Mentoring- senior staff training, how to do internal mentoring
  - Sensitivity
  - Clear about roles, valuing input

### 3. Challenge discussion

#### a. What is a current challenge you have faced in your job?

- Middle School opened across the street, SO MANY TEENS, better cooperation with school, more contact with parents, needless restrictions and different space, application vs. theory.
  1. School librarians different because they have been trained to teach youth.
- Conflict management. Working with trustees and getting them to understand the mission of the library. Racial/social justice and empathy training needed.
- Library has no walls, open floor plan, how to maintain privacy? Employee called student a “twit”. Had been building up and didn’t nip it in the bud. Not assertive enough to confront the issue early on.
- Small moments that equal what do you do. Here for all mission. Eliminating fines very controversial. Did eliminate fines for youth/children. What about veterans and transient (or homeless populations)? Behavior policy, working with social service agencies. Clear definition of what “we are and aren’t”. Identity crisis, people are wishing for days of “yore”. Want to be openness and progressive but what does that look like, how to change the make-up of the board or educate them.
- Evolution of the community. Staff not trained how to deal, not comfortable confronting people. People who are doing illegal stuff in the library prevent the people who want to use it from coming. Had to hire security guard. Security of children, lock bathrooms ask for id. Challenge can’t supervise the whole area. Have Social Services org in the library a couple days a week. Open to all. People won’t come to a library they don’t feel is safe. How to give tools to staff to recognize the difference between is a patron mental health, trouble, or addict. Deescalating problems.
- Huge gap between library school and getting into management (e.g. basic accounting!) Library school has lots of info about libraries, but nothing about management or teaching. Best training was on the job. Library work isn’t just about collection development, but also business administration.
- Diversity in libraries seems to be an afterthought.
- Conflicting goals between large organization (university) and the library.

#### b. Think back to a challenge you have had. Is there anything that would make your job easier?

### 4. Career discussion

#### a. What is a career goal that you have? What do you think you need in order to get there?

#### b. Think about a particular time you felt successful in your job. What influenced that?

#### c. What ONE thing do you wish you had learned in library school?

- Crisis response training- what does open to all mean. What to do when there is someone in your library who is in crisis and needs help
- Gap between finishing school and becoming a manager. Example budgeting
- Didn’t take library school serious. Didn’t learn the stuff you had to live. Management training, how to teach, learned more in real life than did library school. Working in a library while in school.

- School Librarian felt very prepared for career because had an excellent advisor. Responding not getting ahead. Diversity education is an afterthought.
- Hands on learning experience. Budgeting stuff is stressful.
- Administration class is in theory. It's not until your hands on the job you won't learn to do it. Social issues were different when you were in school, have to learn those as you go. Need more Business Administration training, where to cut budget?? Management of people and money.
- Conflicting message- university attracting students, not receiving the means to serve the students, conflict between marketing and reality. How to get admin to listen to staff?

5. Closing

a. Are we missing anything?

- Difference in Academic and Public libraries. Database driven, research library.
- RIPL data driven decision making was really useful.
- School librarian budget advocacy, hierarchy of schools, grants?? Managing multiple book vendors. Basic accounting- understanding reports. Navigating bureaucracy.
- Friends groups
- New Director 101