



LEADERSHIP, ADMINISTRATION, & MANAGEMENT

GROWING & DEVELOPING LIBRARY LEADERS

NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

LAMS Letters

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE LEADERSHIP, ADMINISTRATION, AND MANAGEMENT SECTION OF NCLA



Welcome to the LAMS newsletter! Through contributions from the LAMS Board and members, this newsletter aims to explore insightful topics on leadership and management and keep you informed of upcoming events, trainings, and professional development opportunities so you never miss out. If you have questions or would like to become involved with LAMS, please email lams@nclaonline.org—all inquiries are welcome!

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From the Chair of the Board

Greetings LAMS Members,

If you have been a leader for any length of time, you have most likely dealt with a crisis. Staffing shortages, facility problems, budget cuts, you've seen it. You may have even thought, "Crisis? That's my middle name! Give me a problem and I will solve it." But then along came the pandemic.

Administrators and leaders were collectively thrown into a whirlpool like we have never seen. However, librarians have a history of being resilient, often forging new paths into unfamiliar territory.





And today is no exception. While our world may have been turned upside down, we have slowly, over the past six months found ways to upright it. Leaders have tackled new and difficult issues that often came with a great deal of stress. It was a step-by-step process, and we learned as we went.

As organizations redeveloped their tactical and strategic plans and waited and listened for state and local governing decisions, at times it may have felt like there were no straightforward solution. This became especially difficult to communicate to staff.

But one thing is clear in a pandemic like this: People need their leaders.

Managing staff and working with them through some difficult challenges is one of the hardest things a leader can face. While remote working might have been part of some organizational structures, for others it was a great shift. There were many questions to answer: How do you engage customer service staff remotely? What projects may they work on? How to explain our relevance to our stakeholders? How do we maintain positive relations and, very importantly, how do we bring staff back to the workplace?

Fear and anxiety became genuine issues that leaders had to navigate carefully. Managing staff and their needs and interests during a time of great stress is difficult. But what we learned is there is no single solution that fits all members of a team. Now, more than ever, we need to individualize our approach, find out what each staff member needs, what resources—both local and federal—are available to them, and handle each person with the time and respect they deserve. Connecting the staff person to resources to help them may have been outside your normal purview. Perhaps the idea of showing care, reassurance, and giving extra assistance may be out of the comfort zone of some. But one thing is clear in a pandemic like this: People need their leaders.

Practical Tips for Leaders in a Crisis

- **Communicate frequently.** Sometimes the answer may be “we don’t know yet,” but staff in a crisis want communication, even if their leaders are still figuring it out. Do this in person by email, text, phone, but do it often.
- **Stick to the communication expectations you set.** Communicate clearly. Make your message tangible, concise, and concrete.
- **Be clear with expectations** for working including, safety issues, and appropriate responses to opposing views.
- Figure out and **provide the tools and resources** they need.
- **Stay calm.** Employees will find comfort knowing you’re approaching situations with a level head.
- **Consider special situations** an employee may be dealing with—family, school, caregiving, etc.—and work around them as much as possible.
- **Involve staff** in the process of shifting responsibilities, discover comfort levels with public service, and accommodate as you are able.
- **Go to employees who don’t come to you.** Check in daily if possible, see how they are doing, what can you do for them. Connect them to resources if needed.
- **Be authentic,** employees will respect you for it.
- **Don’t gloss over** difficult or unpopular decisions.

From the Chair, continued...

On pages 7-8 of this issue, you'll find a **Resources List** which we hope will help you address some of these concerns, especially those dedicated to self-care. Leaders who care for themselves will build the resilience needed to lead others. In addition to our curated list, I want to thank the State Library's Continuing Education team. They have done an amazing job providing relevant offerings throughout this crisis. Please check out their **"Train Station"** for the most up-to-date offerings. If you are a new leader, you have earned your crisis badge. Wear it with honor.

Brandy Hamilton, 2019-2021 LAMS Chair



Virtual Leadership Workshops with NC LIVE



This fall, **LAMS** and **NCLA** are pleased to partner with **NC LIVE** to host four **free** virtual Leadership Development workshops. Guest facilitators will share their knowledge on specific leadership competencies and guide you through common leadership challenges. Whether you are in a leadership position already or aspire to be, consider registering for an upcoming Leadership Development workshop.

**Register now!
First workshop
is 9/22**

Check out NC LIVE's website for more details: <https://www.nclive.org/regionalworkshops>

NC LIVE is North Carolina's statewide library cooperative, supporting 200+ public and academic libraries across North Carolina. Since its founding in 1997, NC LIVE has saved the state millions through innovation and collaborative efforts. The NC LIVE mission is to help member libraries to better support education, enhance economic development, and improve the quality of life of all North Carolinians.

GUEST COLUMN



How Resilient is Your Strategic Plan?

By Jami Yazdani, MLIS

When our environment creates an urgency around change, it can feel like our strategic planning has been for naught. The results we had hoped to achieve can quickly take a back seat to more pressing issues, and our timelines may now seem impossible.

Ideally, strategic planning aligns a library's priorities with its purpose, within its community and environment, and with the results it wants to achieve. But if our environment shifts rapidly, our strategic plans may be in danger of irrelevancy, no longer reflecting our priorities or reality.

Given our chaotic climate and the struggles libraries face in responding to the pandemic, will our existing strategic plans weather the storm?

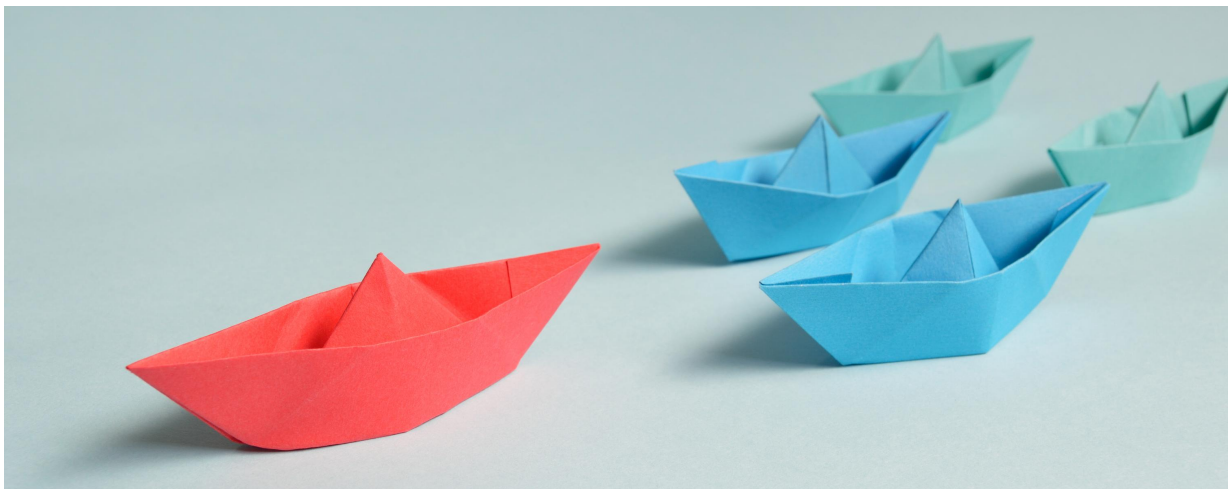
An **Impactful Strategic Planning** approach helps ensure plan resilience by **focusing on transparency and actionable implementation**:

- Transparency requires an **inclusive approach to stakeholder involvement**, and communication and engagement with the community during both planning and implementation. Transparency can result in plan goals which reflect broader, more inclusive priorities (rather than narrowly defined objectives), allowing for greater flexibility as the environment changes.

Jami Yazdani, MLIS, spent more than 15 years working in libraries, serving in circulation, librarian, and director roles, before founding **Yazdani Consulting and Facilitation**. She has hands-on experience leading planning in libraries: From strategic and technology planning, to exploring and implementing new staffing and service models, she has led and championed planning that is flexible, transparent, inclusive, and results in real change. As a certified Project Management Professional (PMP), Jami brings a results-driven perspective to planning and implementation. Learn more about Yazdani Consulting and Facilitation's solutions for libraries at yazdaniconsulting.com/libraries.

- Actionable implementation makes **implementation an integral part of the planning process**, infusing plan goals and priorities throughout every level of the organization. Measurable and specific objectives for supporting plan goals are developed for departments and teams, incorporated into project and budget proposals, and reflected in performance evaluations and professional development activities. Implementation objectives are revised more frequently than strategic goals, allowing for adjustments as circumstances and needs change, with progress towards these objectives shared and recognized.

Impactful Strategic Planning is a community effort, not a leadership activity. Transparency and actionable implementation support increased flexibility and create a culture of shared responsibility and accountability for achieving plan goals. It is this inclusiveness, adjustability and shared investment in success that supports plan resilience and has an enduring impact. Impactful strategic plans can weather dynamic circumstances, and serve as the beacon guiding your organization forward. How resilient is your strategic plan?



We're Looking for Leaders

LEADERSHIP CORNER

Do you have a colleague whose leadership style you admire? Is someone in your professional network leading creatively? Has a coworker shared meaningful management tips that others need to know? If so, let us know!

We're looking for current (or potential) LAMS members to feature in an upcoming newsletter. Please send your nominations to lams@nclaonline.org.



Membership Survey

As mentioned in our last newsletter, the LAMS Executive Board is seeking your input to better meet the **networking and professional development needs** of our community—particularly during these turbulent times. Tell us what you need at the survey here: <http://bit.ly/LAMS-survey>

*Tell us
what you
need!*



SAVE THE DATE

Managing Workplace Anxiety

Virtual Workshop with Meridian Resources

October 8, 2020

More information coming soon!

Surviving COVID-19: Resources for Libraries

The Future of Libraries

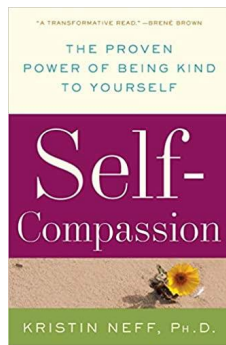
- What Libraries Will Look Like Upon Reopening: https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/local-opinions/local-libraries-will-look-a-lot-different-when-they-reopen/2020/05/07/9a7646e8-8963-11ea-ac8a-fe9b8088e101_story.html
- Libraries Around the World Prepare for a New Normal: <https://www.bibliotheca.com/reopening-libraries-after-covid-19/>
- Center for the Future of Libraries: Coronavirus Pandemic (2019-2020): <http://www.ala.org/tools/future/trends/coronavirus>
- The Post-Pandemic Future of Libraries: <https://www.theatlantic.com/notes/2020/05/post-pandemic-future-libraries/611458/>
- ALA Survey Reports Similar Library Reopening Plans, But Scattered Schedules: <https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=ala-survey-reports-similar-library-reopening-plans-scattered-schedules-covid-19>
- COVID-19's Impact on Libraries Goes Beyond Books: <https://www.wired.com/story/covid-19-libraries-impact-goes-beyond-books/>
- In the Field: Stopping the Covid Slide: <https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/childrens/childrens-industry-news/article/83521-in-the-field-stopping-the-covid-slide.html>
- Reopening Gets Real: Libraries Enact Post-Pandemic Plans to Keep Workers and Patrons Safe: <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/blogs/the-scoop/reopening-libraries-gets-real>

Curated by
LAMS chair
Brandy Hamilton

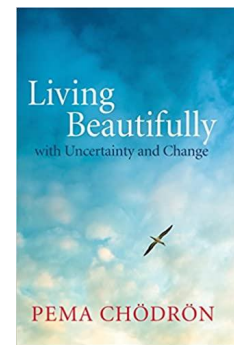
COVID-19 Safety

- Covid Safety Tips for Reopening a Library: <https://ideas.demco.com/webinar/covid-19-safety-tips-for-reopening-your-library/>
- Reopening: Guidance for Libraries: https://aiha-assets.sfo2.digitaloceanspaces.com/AIHA/resources/Reopening-Guidance-for-Libraries_GuidanceDocument.pdf
- Playbook for Safe Work: Toledo Lucas County Public Library : <https://medium.com/@J450NK/toledo-lucas-county-public-library-safe-work-playbook-designed-for-libraries-170626707d89>

- Cloth Face Coverings: Questions and Answers from the CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>
- Cleaning and Disinfection for Households: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html>
- Wearing Face Masks: <https://youtu.be/BmdR7xEo-vE>
- Public Libraries: Your Planning Guide for Reopening: <https://ideas.demco.com/blog/public-libraries-your-planning-guide-for-reopening/>



Books



Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself
By Dr. Kristin Neff

Living Beautifully with Uncertainty and Change
By Pema Chödrön

Self-Care

- 5 Ways to Avoid Burnout by Mindtools: https://youtu.be/_3QArrb9lgE
- Managing Stress Coming Back to Work: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/mental-health-non-healthcare.html>
- The Gift and Power of Emotional Courage: https://www.ted.com/talks/susan_david_the_gift_and_power_of_emotional_courage
- Taking Care of Us: InReach for Library Staff: <https://youtu.be/9niMilgmQco>
- Insight Timer: Free Resources for Meditations: <https://insighttimer.com/meditation-playlists>
- Developing Resilience Overcoming and Growing From Setbacks: <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/resilience.htm>

Internal Customer Service

- COVID Care: A Way Forward Opening Up Social Circles: <https://medium.com/@evelindacker/covid-care-e2ede67428d4>
- How to Embrace Emotions at Work: https://www.ted.com/talks/liz_fosslien_how_to_embrace_emotions_at_work
- A Primer for New Teleworkers: <https://continuinged.isl.in.gov/a-primer-for-new-teleworkers-1-leu-2/>