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Editorial

At the beginning of 2022 I wrote an editorial for *New Review of Academic Librarianship* in which I attempted to do some environmental scanning as we entered a post-pandemic academic library world (Appleton, 2022). The trends identified included focusing on: digital transformation and digital shift; Open Higher Education; data management and curation; increased user expectations with regard to the 'connected customer'; student support and wellbeing; diversity and inclusion; climate change and sustainability; and lastly, leadership development I order to enable all of the above. This is in respect of academic library leaders and managers needing to 'pick up the pieces' and lead and manage a new emerging set of academic requirements and expectations. I actually concluded the editorial with "Library leaders need to become more critical of themselves and the position of their library services and this move to more critical library management requires strong and focused leadership development initiatives." (Appleton, 2022, 5). But how is this achieved? Who enables such leadership development? Is it the responsibility of academic library leaders themselves to become critical library managers and leaders?

I was also reflecting recently more generally on leadership behaviours and what we as a profession expect from our leaders regardless of needing them to continue to move the profession forwards. Bryson (2016) suggests that leadership behaviours should include, amongst others: a strong commitment and eagerness to enable the organisation to survive and excel; energy, drive and capacity to engage and keep others enthusiastic, even in difficult circumstances; and a strong personal commitment to ethics, truth and integrity. I would not disagree with any of these and think that each of these behaviours is essential in order to lead our academic libraries into the future The latter listed behaviour, that of a commitment to ethics, truth and integrity is of particular note in that values driven leadership needs to be more prominent and more widely advocated as we move into the 2020s and into a digitally amplified post-pandemic world.

Bryson (2016) goes onto discuss the attributes that she considers make a strong leader including: ability to identify, value and enable people who share their talents, intelligence and knowledge; enabling creative environments that support and actively encourage people to bring their creative ideas to work; instilling a culture that is based on ethics and integrity; and having the foresight and capacity to endure and confront financial, environmental, technological and workforce challenges. Therefore if we take some of these strong leadership actions and looks at them through a 'values' lens, my own take on this is that we are defining values driven leadership as being able to engage library staff to collaborate in order to create inclusive working environments, which are both creative and safe. The academic library needs to be a workplace in which individuals and diversity can thrive; a place in which innovation and measured risk-taking (i.e. trying new things) are encouraged. Library workers are looking at their leaders and managers to enable this, so they must be aware of the professional shadow that they cast as leaders. Library leaders need to role model so a heightened sese of self-awareness and emotional intelligence becomes more important than ever before. Values driven leadership also relies on ethical leadership behaviours in which equity, fairness and integrity is always present, whilst acknowledging organisational culture and 'calling out' situations where this doesn't exist. Academic library workers will look to their leaders to help inform their own values, so the professional shadow also becomes an ethical shadow.

If the academic library truly is an environment where workers can thrive, especially during these turbulent and changing times, then the users of those libraries will also prosper. Academic library leaders need to be active and proactive in making this happen so that their

teams are ready, equipped and confident to deliver the library mission and enabling an environment in which students and academics can thrive.

References

Appleton, L. (2022) Trendspotting : looking to the future in a post-pandemic academic library environment, *New Review of Academic Librarianship*, 28,1, 1-6

Bryson, J. (2016) *Managing information services: an innovative approach.* 4th ed. London : Routledge.