

News from the SAA Archives Management Roundtable

1992 Program Committee

Phil Mooney of the 1992 Program Committee spoke briefly at the Archives Management Roundtable meeting in Philadelphia. He talked about the 1992 meeting in Montreal, Canada. SAA will be meeting in conjunction with the International Congress on Archives (ICA) and the Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA). ICA meets September 6-11, ACA meets September 12-14, and SAA will meet September 14-18. SAA and ACA have agreed to reciprocal registration. This means that SAA registrants will be able to attend ACA sessions.

The SAA program will feature 80 tracks. CGAP will sponsor 5 sessions. All of the Roundtables and affinity groups are encouraged to submit program proposals. Tim Erickson, 1992 Program Committee Chair, is encouraging non-traditional panel sessions for the 1992 meeting. The deadline for proposals was October 18, 1991.

1992 Roundtable Meeting Plans

Plans for the 1992 Roundtable include a speaker on the impact of cultural differences on management and several focus groups; the Lone Arranger; budget development and defense; and dealing with difficult people. Hal Keiner volunteered to provide management video tapes.

Roundtable 1992 Program Proposals

The Roundtable meeting in Philadelphia developed the following program proposals for the 1992 annual meeting.

1. The Critical Path as a Planning Technique
2. The Clash of Cultures: Archivists and Managers
3. Making the Numbers Work
4. Leadership and Motivation
5. Survival in an Era of Change

SAA Manual on Management Available

The newest manual in the SAA Archival Fundamentals Series is Tom Wilstead and Bill Nolte's Managing Archival and Manuscript Repositories. Copies are available from the SAA office for \$19.00 to members and \$25.00 to non-members. Postage and handling for orders under \$20.00 is \$3.50 for domestic mail and \$5.00 outside the U.S.A.

Like Alcoholics Anonymous, the manual starts by getting you, the archivist, to admit that you are a manager. Then the authors go on to provide basic information about the various aspects of administering an archival program. While this brief manual cannot completely cover all aspects of the wide variety of management functions involved in running an archival program, the suggested readings at the end of each chapter provide useful sources of additional information.

Especially strong are the chapters on Financial Management and Fund Raising and Development. The financial management section has a variety of budget worksheets and advice on how to allocate your resources among the various functions. The chapter on development has sample grant application forms. The effective use of illustrations, charts, and examples makes this manual an excellent addition to the Archival Fundamentals Series.

Management Concepts: Corporate Culture

There are many management concepts which can be useful in administering an archival program. The first step in setting up a good program is defining your identity. We generally think of this as defining the collection policy for your repository but, in fact, it is much broader than that. The sort of program you will be able to establish will be influenced by a number of factors. One of these factors is the corporate culture in which you will operate. Examining the culture of your particular institution will help you in defining or refining your program. Your program will stand a much better chance of success if it fits into the corporate culture of the institution or governing body that it serves.

Corporate culture, as defined in 1984 by Terrence Deal and Allan Kennedy is a management concept composed off five aspects. First is the business environment. This includes size, placement, (are you independent or part of a large bureaucracy), and the marketplace in which you operate. The marketplace is both competition and customers. For an archival or manuscript repository, marketplace competition is generally other repositories with similar collection policies or agencies or offices that want to maintain their own "archives." Our customers are our users, both internal and external.

Values constitute the second aspect of the corporate culture. These are the basic beliefs as to what rates high or low. Within a larger institution these values can be identified in the policies and programs of the institution. If people are important to an institution, training and staff development will be strong programs. If profit is the motive, efficient operations and efficient managers will be rewarded. Within an archival setting various basic principles can be considered values too. Is preservation the primary focus of your program or is reference and outreach? How you spend your time and money should be a good clue.

The third aspect of a corporate culture is its heroes. We could pretend that our heroes or heroines are Jameson, Norton, Connor, and Schellenberg, but why lie. According to the management texts, heroes can be a current or past top leader or executive, an outstanding can-do performer, or an extremely popular individual at any level. Each institution is has its own heroes.

The fourth aspect of corporate culture is its rites and rituals. These are such corporate practices as anniversary celebrations, picnics, parties, retirement

dinners and so on. If your staff rarely meets outside the work place except at very formal gatherings, that tells you something about your corporate culture.

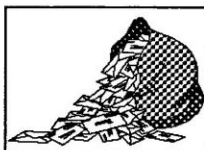
The final aspect of corporate culture is the "secret" network. This is the subsurface communication by storytellers, spies, cliques, rumor mongers, and whisperers who form a "hidden hierarchy of power." These are Deal and Kennedy's words. Think about how information is transmitted within your organization. How are you likely to learn of personnel changes?

Think about the corporate culture of your institution. How can you shape your program to fit into that culture? What you learn about that culture will help you shape your budget requests and write your justifications. It should help you decide which programs are most likely to succeed. You will be better able to define and refine your administrative program. In short, you will be a better manager.

Supervisory and Management Tips

One of the basic principles of time management is also one of the most effective management tools available to an archivist. It is deadlines. Give your employees deadlines and check with them regularly on the status of their projects. Give yourself deadlines and then meet them.

-This tip was provided by Mike McReynolds, Director of the Textual Reference Division, Office of National Archives



Management Mailbag

In future issues, I would like to include letters, articles, suggested reading and tips from everyone. We are our own best resource. Please send any article, letter, tip, or suggestions to: Cynthia Fox; Administrative Staff (NN-B); Office of National Archives; Washington, DC 20408. If possible, a Wordperfect version on disk would be much appreciated. Disks will be returned.