

Archives Management Roundtable Newsletter

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2006 SAA/NAGARA/CoSA
Archives Management Roundtable Meeting
Thursday, August 3, 2006, 4:30-6:00 PM

Change Management at NARA: A Brief Case Study

Presented by: Michael Kurtz and Marilyn Bott

NARA is pursuing a vigorous change management strategy to deal with the effects of the Electronic Records Archives system now under development and several other initiatives involving the archival and records management programs. This brief case study will describe the interaction between people, processes, and technology and the key elements of an effective change management strategy. Michael Kurtz, Assistant Archivist for Records Services and Marilyn Bott, NARA's director of Organizational Development, will lead the case study.

Archives Management Roundtable 2006 Annual Meeting Notes:

MANAGING EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Lois Hamill, College of the Holy Cross, and Casey Edward Greene, SAA Archives Management Roundtable Chair, presented "Short and Simple: Effective Presentation Skills for Archivists" at the Roundtable's meeting on August 18, 2005, in New Orleans. A summary of Greene's discussion of meetings follows.

Effective versus Ineffective Meetings

Much of the archivist's workweek is tied up in meetings, which too often waste his or her time. Ineffective meetings often lack focus and tend to go off in many directions at once. A few people may dominate the discourse, or participants, fearing personal attacks, may become reticent. The result is all talk and no action. Archivists can counter bad meetings by learning to become adept at planning, organizing, and conducting *effective* meetings. In so doing, they enhance their own credibility with their fellow coworkers. Effective meetings summon one's leadership and management skills, including human relations, negotiation, conflict resolution, and decision-making.

Criteria for Effective Meetings

First, effective meetings have a *purpose*. They serve as a means to an end, such as sharing information, clarifying an issue, or solving a problem.

Second, they operate according to an *agenda*, which serves to keep the meeting on track. The agenda provides advance notice to participants about the meeting's purpose and content. It prioritizes discussion points, placing them at the beginning of the meeting, and informational items toward the end. It specifies start and end times, as well as breaks.

Third, effective meetings involve *consensus*. Participants take part in developing a solution that represents the viewpoints of all. They support the group's decision without feeling that they had to give up something in return. Effective meetings thus achieve win/win solutions. Participants feel that their input has been valued and their involvement worthwhile.

Fourth, everyone knows what is expected of him or her. The *Leader* decides on the meeting's purpose, calls the meeting, and chooses a facilitator, recorder, and participants. The *Facilitator*, who actually conducts the meeting, sets the agenda. He or she maintains neutrality, encourages participation, confronts disruptions, and resolves disagreements. The *Recorder* takes notes and prepares a discussion summary for distribution after the meeting. The *Participants* review pertinent materials in advance, show up and leave it on time, and contribute their opinions.

Making a Meeting a Success

Groups are inherently political in the sense that they consist of people, who often hold hidden agendas. Ideally, participants should suborn their needs and wishes to those of the group. The leader recruit persons who have needed expertise and a direct stake in the outcome, function well in a group setting, and share their organization's values. Likewise, he or she tries to screen

out individuals who refuse to support the meeting's purpose, as well as known troublemakers and people who have an indirect stake in the outcome. The leader sticks to the agenda and is diligent in starting and stopping the meeting on time, as well as enforcing time limits for breaks. Effective leadership involves finding a happy medium between letting the discussion proceed unfettered and stepping in as necessary to handle disruptions and interruptions. The leader thus serves as the meeting's "cop," keeping it moving in a harmonious manner.

Bibliography

- Doyle, Michael, and Straus, David. *How to Make Meetings Work! The New Interaction Method*. New York: Berkley Books, c1976.
- Hawkins, Charlie. *First Aid For Meetings: Quick Fixes and Major Repairs For Running Effective Meetings*. Wilsonville, Oregon: BookPartners, c1997.
- Timm, Paul R., Ph.D., *How to Hold Successful Meetings: 39 Action Tips for Managing Effective Meetings*. Franklin Lakes, NJ: Career Press, 1997.
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A Professional Development Opportunity: American Humanics Inc.

A major role of the Archives Management Roundtable is to create and find opportunities that will help archival professionals develop managerial skills. This article is a result of a conversation I recently had with, Shannon Michalak, a Wright State University Public History graduate student who works with me as an intern in the University of Dayton Archives and Special Collections. Shannon was telling me about a newly offered elective course that she is taking entitled "Management of Non-profit Organizations." The class is offered in conjunction with WSU's Center for Urban and Public Affairs and American Humanics Inc. and is open to all majors. I thought it would be interesting to find out more about American Humanics and whether professional archivists could benefit from the program.

Dr. Mary V. Wenning, WSU American Humanics Program Director was kind enough to meet with me to explain the origins, current status and future plans of American Humanics Inc. American Humanics is an association of colleges, universities and nonprofits dedicated to the development of professionals prepared to manage nonprofit organizations. American Humanics is over 50 years old and started in Kansas City, Kansas as a program for undergraduates to gain positions managing youth and human services nonprofit organizations. The program has evolved into a nonprofit management certification program that is offered at over 70 college and universities in the United States.

The program is competency based, with a required internship, and is offered to undergraduate students regardless of their major. The curriculum focuses on management related issues, such as, ethics, volunteer management, fundraising, budgeting, and marketing. In recent years, many schools have begun to provide opportunities for graduate students to gain certification. Future plans include developing online competency courses that will be available to working professionals seeking continuing education opportunities. According to Dr. Wenning a handful of schools, including Arizona State University and CSU-Fresno, are already offering weekend

professional development classes for managers who are already working for nonprofit organizations.

Roundtable members can find out more about American Humanics, Inc. and potential opportunities for working archivists and graduate students at:

<http://www.humanics.org/site/c.oML2KiN4LvH/b.1098773/k.BE7C/Home.htm> (click on "academic partners" and then "academic affiliate listing" to find a program near you.)

Information regarding certification requirements for undergraduate and graduate students can be found at:

[http://www.humanics.org/site/c.oML2KiN4LvH/b.1098911/k.72B1/Certificatoin Information.htm](http://www.humanics.org/site/c.oML2KiN4LvH/b.1098911/k.72B1/Certificatoin%20Information.htm)

--submitted by Kerrie A. Cross, Newsletter Editor

Professional or Institutional News Wanted

Roundtable members are encouraged to submit professional accomplishments and institutional news items for inclusion in this newsletter. Please send submissions to Kerrie A. Cross, University Archivist, Albert Emanuel Hall Room 211, University of Dayton, Dayton, OH 45469-1360, or Kerrie.Cross@udayton.edu.