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IMPLEMENTATION OF A SELF-DIRECTED STAFF TRAINING PILOT PROGRAM AT OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

BY ROB TENCH

Abstract

Old Dominion University Library staff recently implemented a self-directed staff training program after a successful six-month pilot project by two units in the Library. Influenced by similar programs at other libraries, the plan is voluntary and collaborative. Its primary objectives are to assist employees with developing the skill sets necessary to meet 21st century library challenges.

Author Supplied Keywords

Self-training, Self-learning, Self-development, Training, Adult learning

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Introduction

Without a doubt, staff training programs are necessary for organizations to develop employee knowledge, skills, and abilities. Traditionally, training programs have been in-person with fixed training dates, times, and locations. Furthermore, attendance at training programs has been dictated by employer needs more than by employee interests, and such programs have tended to focus on training directly related to an employee's daily responsibilities. However, with the preponderance of the Internet and other electronic options, more choices are available to employers and their workers. Program formats for employees now include webinars, e-forums, archived programs, streaming media, and many other options. In fact, several software programs, such as Lynda.com, are dedicated exclusively to skill development on both a personal and a professional level. There is also a growing realization by employers that employees can benefit greatly in attending programs that may not necessarily be considered directly related to an employee's core responsibilities.

Developing a well-trained and highly skilled workforce is a fundamental goal for most organizations. Research in the field of self-learning tells us that self-directed training programs help organizations achieve that goal. Seminal works such as Ralph Brockett's and Roger Hiemstra's *Self Direction in Adult Learning*,¹ Allan Tough's *The Adult's*

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Learning Project,² Malcolm Knowles' *Self-Directed Learning: A Guide for Learners and Teachers*,³ and several other studies have demonstrated the significance of self-directed learning and training programs. To that end, several academic and public libraries have implemented highly effective self-directed staff training programs. At the Virginia Library Association's 2015 Professional Associates Forum, members of the Old Dominion University's (ODU) Library Staff Development Team attended a presentation about one of those initiatives—a self-directed achievement program at George Mason University (GMU).⁴ Modelled after a similar program at Toole City Library in Utah, the presenters outlined the initiative's goals, staff roles, staff responsibilities, and program requirements.

Significantly influenced by that presentation, members of the ODU Library Staff Development Team developed a proposal to initiate a similar program. The Staff Development Team pitched the concept to the Library's Management Team who agreed to a six-month pilot project to gauge staff interest and to determine the feasibility of implementing a self-directed training program for library staff. One public service unit and one technical service unit participated in the pilot. For the most part, staff feedback was positive despite a few challenges and concerns. After the pilot project's completion, the Staff Development Team refined its plan to include a model based on pilot participants' recommendations and the experiences of other libraries with self-directed training. The Management Team accepted the Staff Development Team's final recommendations without modification, and the ODU Library Self-Directed Training Program launched July 1, 2016.

This article includes background on self-directed learning, a discussion on the differences and similarities of other library self-directed training programs, how these programs influenced the development of a self-directed program at ODU, and an outline of the ODU Library's staff directed training initiative from initial proposal to final implementation. The review includes a report on pilot project results, timeline creation for the formal program, and proposed assessment metrics to measure program effectiveness and goal achievement.

...This article includes a report on the ODU Self-Directed Training Program pilot project results, a formal program timeline, and proposed assessment methods.

Basic Self-Learning and Self-Directed Training Concepts

Training that leads to enhanced skill development is critical to employee and organizational success. Self-directed training programs are evolving into an essential component of that skill development. According to Fleming, Artis, and Hawes, "the ability of an organization to adapt to its changing environment can be enhanced by more capable employees and those capabilities can be further developed by the provision of opportunities for self-directed learning, including less expensive formats that utilize technology."⁵

Malcolm Knowles, a pioneer in self-directed learning studies defined self-directed learning (SDL) as a "process by which individuals take the initiative, with or without the assistance of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes."⁶ Building upon Knowles' definition, other researchers have defined SDL as containing eight elements: (1) it is a process (2) that is initiated by an individual, (3) which may or may not involve the help of others to (4) identify their learning needs, (5) develop learning goals from these needs, (6) find the necessary resources to attain these goals, (7) select and implement the proper learning strategies to meet their goals, and (8) determine how to measure learning outcomes.⁷

Clardy extended the self-directed learning concept by developing a four-part typology based on the initiator of the project and the nature of the learning involved.⁸ The first type of SDL project according to Clardy is called induced, a project type initiated and required by an employer.⁹ In this SDL type, supervisors provide employees with information they need to know, make employees responsible for their learning, and assess what employees

learn.¹⁰ Clardy's second type of SDL project is synergistic.¹¹ Like induced SDL projects, educational materials are provided by the organization; however in synergistic projects, employees choose whether to participate and assess their progress.¹² The third type of Clardy project type is known as voluntary.¹³ Voluntary SDL projects have a pre-determined end and are entirely enacted by employees who know what knowledge is needed, where to find necessary information, and how to evaluate what they have learned.¹⁴ The fourth type of SDL project is classified as scanning.¹² Like the voluntary SDL type, participation is voluntary, employees know where to find their information, and understand how to evaluate their learning.¹⁵ However, a scanning SDL is ongoing with no predetermined end.¹⁶

Old Dominion University Libraries self-directed model is based on Knowles' basic definition of self-directed learning, the eight elements of self-directed learning as defined by extended research, and Clardy's SDL scanning type.

Background of Self-Directed Learning

Self-directed training programs are built on the cornerstone of self-directed learning concepts and theories. During the 1960s, two foundational studies laid the groundwork for much of the modern research on self-directed learning.¹⁷ In his 1961 work *The Inquiring Mind*, a qualitative study on adult learning, Cyril Houle identified "learning oriented" learners as self-directed learners.¹⁸ In 1965, Johnstone and Rivera reported in *Volunteers for Learning* that 8% of adults in the United States were involved in at least one major self-education project in the sample year of 1961-1962.¹⁹ For nearly thirty years after those studies, the theory of self-directed learning was the subject of much research, with the work of Tough (1971), Knowles (1975), Long (1975), Hiemstra (1976), and Gugliemlo (1978) of most significance.²⁰ In *The Adult's Learning Project*, Allen Tough, a student of Houle's, conducted extensive research on adult self-learners and documented how they learned, the number of learning projects they completed, and types of resources they used in the process.²¹ The interview schedule he used to gather his information is still utilized by scholars.²² Knowles, another student of Houle's, produced several seminal works, including *Self-Directed Learning: A Guide for Learners and Teachers*, a practical guide about and for self-directed learning.²³ Long created a model for analyzing interacting variables in self-learning and founded the annual International Symposium on Self-Directed Learning which continues to this day.²⁴ Hiemstra conducted an extensive study on leaning projects of older adults, led discussion on self-directed learning as an evolving area of theory on adult education, and co-developed the Personal Responsibility Orientation Model (PRO) which views self-direction in learning as encompassing two distinct elements: self-directed learning and learner self-direction.²⁵ Gugliemlo introduced a new methodology into self-directed learning research, which lead to a consensus on characteristics necessary for self-directed learning and an instrument to determine readiness for self-directed learning—the Self Directed Learning Readiness Scale.²⁶

Important qualitative studies of self-directed learning were done in the United States in the 1980s by Gibbons et. al., Spear and Mocker, Brockett, and Grow.²⁷ Gibbons (1980) collaborated on a qualitative study of twenty individuals who became experts in their fields without formal training beyond high school.²⁸ Spear and Mocker (1984) presented the concept of environmental determination on the process of self-directed learning.²⁹ Brockett's research concentrated on the hard-to-reach adult using three distinct streams of inquiry in his studies: descriptive research, quantitative, and naturalistic studies.³⁰ In addition, he worked with Hiemstra (1991) to produce one of the most comprehensive reviews of the literature on self-directed learning to that time.³¹ In 1991, Grow published his staged self-directed model, proposing four stages of readiness for self-directed learning and discussing appropriate instructional approaches.³²

The number of scholarly articles on self-directed learning in journals has declined since the mid-1980s and early 1990s; however, an increase in research on self-directed learning in books and in selected papers from the Self-Directed Learning Symposia indicate that research on the topic has not diminished.³³ More recent research has been centered on the concept that self-directed learning is based on two dimensions: the first is

self-motivation (an autonomous, authentic free will to learn), and the second is self-regulation (the exercise of authentic, self-controlled learning activity).³⁴

Much new research is now published in the International Society for Self-Directed Learning's (ISSDL) open-access journal *The International Journal of Self-Directed Learning*.³⁵ The ISSDL, founded in 2005, is dedicated to the promotion of self-directed lifelong learning, including self-directed training, and to the encouragement and dissemination of continued research on self-directed learning. It shares information via its journal, the annual International Self-Directed Learning Symposium, and its website.³⁶

Library Self-Directed Training Programs

As interest in developing a self-directed staff training program grew at ODU, staff development team members began researching programs at other libraries for best practices and insights. They discovered that several libraries had implemented viable self-directed training programs. One of the earliest and best known is The Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County of North Carolina's Learning 2.0 initiative.³⁷ Learning 2.0 encourages library staff to explore Web 2.0 tools by completing twenty-three exercises involving new technologies.³⁸ ODU learned three things from this prototype: new technology tools work well in self-development programs, self-directed learning works best when all staff have an opportunity to participate, and communication is essential for program success. Since its inception, the program has been replicated by more than 250 libraries and organizations worldwide.³⁹

...ODU learned three things from the Learning 2.0 initiative: new technology tools work well in self-development programs, self-directed learning works best when all staff have an opportunity to participate, and communication is essential for program success.

One of those libraries, the Santa Cruz (CA) Public Library, initiated 23 Things @SCPL, a self-directed online program with the objectives of encouraging staff to explore new technologies, providing staff with new tools to better support the library's mission, rewarding staff for completing 23 self-discovery exercises, and offering staff opportunities to discover, play, and learn.⁴⁰ The SCPL initiative demonstrated to ODU that library administration commitment and support are critical to program success, staff need sufficient time to complete programs, and training programs should focus on practical tools that are or will be used by library staff.

Brigham Young University (BYU) Library also developed a self-directed training program similar to Learning 2.0 called Technology Challenge.⁴¹ At BYU, employees were asked to spend fifteen minutes each day learning a new library skill and were awarded points toward a gift certificate at the University's book store (Quinnney, p. 206).⁴² One difference in BYU's 2.0 program was that participants completed pre and post surveys about their use and knowledge of technology before and after program participation.⁴³ The BYU takeaways for ODU were that employees who completed the Technology Challenge increased their work productivity, were highly motivated to continue learning, and reported being happier and more excited about their jobs—all outcomes ODU hoped to accomplish with its program.

Other libraries have enacted self-directed library staff training programs that emphasize the development of library, interpersonal, and critical thinking skills as well as improving technology abilities. One such library is the Tooele City Library in Utah. In Tooele's model, called Self-Directed Achievement, staff are asked to spend one hour per week in self-directed training, to keep a record of their training, and to discuss takeaways from the training with their supervisor.⁴⁴ Additionally, employees are charged with answering three questions each week: were your goals achieved that week; if not, what was in the way; and what are your goals for the current week.⁴⁵ The program's two main objectives are to set up employees for success and to develop a work force with 21st century skills.⁴⁶ According to Toole, Self-Directed Achievement is not a program—it is a

culture.⁴⁷ Characteristics of the Toole program, an emphasis on developing critical thinking skills, collaboration between employee and supervisor, and employees being given a reasonable amount of time to complete programs, were features ODU decided would be cornerstones of its self-directed initiative.

George Mason University, a peer institution of ODU, implemented a Self-Directed Achievement Program in 2014 using the Toole program as a model in response to an upper management push for increased tech and “critical and emerging area” skills development.⁴⁸ How GMU planned, developed, and implemented its program were of keen interest to ODU because the campuses share similar missions, student demographics, and staff development goals.

Self-Directed Training at ODU – Planning

Several ODU Library staff members attended an outstanding presentation on the GMU self-directed training model by Megan Hunt and Beth Roszkowski at the 2015 VLA Professional Associates Forum. Ms. Hunt and Ms. Roszkowski explained in detail how the Library implemented its self-directed training program. Goals for employees were to learn and to explore training opportunities based on their interests and job responsibilities, to engage in training that was continuous and individualized, and to help to develop a library learning culture.⁴⁹ The initiative had three requirements for participants: complete programs that were library or job related, spend at least one hour per week in training, and meet with individual supervisors for 15 minutes each week to review and to discuss training and takeaways.⁵⁰ It was the staff member’s responsibility to identify trainings of interest, to set aside time each week for the training, and to be accountable once enrolled in the program. Staff members were also asked to complete a Self-Directed Achievement Log.⁵¹ Supervisors were expected to help identify appropriate trainings, to schedule meetings with staff, and to ask questions.⁵²

Many of the ODU staffers who attended the presentation serve on the Library’s Staff Development Team. This team is responsible for addressing staff development needs by identifying and scheduling appropriate training programs. Often, team members conduct training themselves. Those who attended the GMU presentation returned enthusiastic about the possibility of implementing a self-directed program at ODU and began working on a plan. The Staff Member Development Team was of the opinion that a self-directed training program would make efficient use of already existing staff development resources that had been underutilized, such as online resources, campus programs, self-study books, and articles. Equally important, costs for implementing the program would be minimal. The Staff Development Team expressed confidence that a self-directed staff training program would serve as an excellent supplement to current Staff Development programming by providing additional training outlets and opportunities.

The Staff Development Team discussed the possibility of a self-directed training project with Library Administration and developed a basic model for consideration. Self-directed training would consist of employees utilizing online training resources, attending campus programs, and reading books or articles. With input from their supervisors, programs selected by participants would be based on skill sets employees needed and wanted to develop. Participants would then agree to a specific amount of time each week to spend in training, up to three hours per week. Participants were expected to discuss programs of interest with their supervisors.

Collaboratively, the employee and supervisor would work together to establish a basic program over a set period of time. The employee would maintain a training log (see fig. 1) that could be incorporated in the employee’s evaluation. The logs asked for the training program’s name, length, date, and subject area. Participants were also asked to provide a brief synopsis of the training program.

A total of 57 programs were completed by the unit as follows:

- Professional Associate One – 6
- Professional Associate Two – 13
- Professional Associate Three – 12
- Professional Associate Four – 10
- Librarian - 16

Participants viewed more programs in the areas of Communications (17), Library Skills (13), Interpersonal Skills (11), and Technology Literacy (11) than any other. They completed programs in all but two areas: Information Literacy and Media Literacy. This chart (see fig. 2) displays program completion areas.

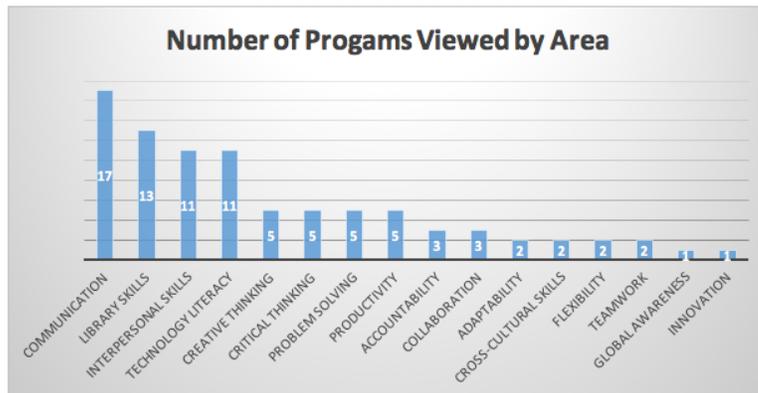


Figure 2: Pilot Programs Completed by Acquisitions & Preservation Services Staff
NOTE: A program could be classified in multiple areas.

Several unit members watched programs from Lynda.com but found them to be a bit technical and lengthy. Other training session providers included Ex-Libris (Alma training), the American Management Association, Library Journal, Association of Research Libraries, and the Effectiveness Institute. Unit members commented that finding things on their own was difficult. They felt it was much easier for their supervisor to send them suggestions for possible viewing rather than searching out programs themselves. Receiving monthly and weekly updates from the Library of Virginia about free online programs helped participants significantly in identifying appropriate viewing options for the project.

Unit members liked being able to watch webinars and training modules at their workstations despite an occasional distraction or interruption. They did not find distractions or interruptions to be an issue. Carving out time to watch or to attend programs was a challenge for participants. In addition, it was difficult for them to get motivated at times. Often programs were completed at the end of a month as a last minute decision to meet that month's goal. The consensus was that self-directed training took them away from their jobs too much. Their priority was getting work tasks completed rather than engaging in a self-training program.

Unit members preferred programs directly related to their core job duties, but those programs were often hard for them to find. They also enjoyed webinars on subjects other than those on library skills or technology literacy especially presentations about self-improvement. In particular, they cited a Ted Talk on introverts as a favorite.⁵³

On the whole, unit members, in their words, "did not take much interest in the program," even though they recognized the benefits of self-directed training. They did not recommend making self-directed training mandatory for University Libraries. Instead, to a person, they wanted a full-fledged program to be voluntary. If self-directed training were to be implemented by the Library, the unit recommended a mandatory limit on program participation of one training program per month. One member preferred a more structured approach with the Staff Development Team scheduling their programs.

Reference Department Pilot

Although the Reference Services Department is larger than the Acquisitions & Preservation Services unit, fewer of its employees signed up for the pilot. The Reference Department consists of the Head of Reference Services, seven Librarians, and five professional associates. Of the thirteen-member department, only two members—both professional associates—participated in the program. Timing of the pilot greatly affected participation. The pilot ran from October 2015 through March 2016, peak periods of instruction for the department. Consequently, it was difficult for the reference staff to commit to six months of self-directed training.

One of the two participants spent his directed staff training time on reading articles and watching Lynda.com programs guided primarily by work performance objectives. This associate's primary responsibility is to assist with instruction, including designing posters, charts, and designs. His goal during the pilot was to improve his skills as an instructor. In addition, as a member of the Library's Communications Team, the employee wanted to enhance his communication skills. He read quite a few articles on improving presentation skills given to him by the Instructional Services Librarian. He spent the remainder of his time viewing technology literacy programs, such as SharePoint basics, advanced skills in Microsoft Outlook, and graphic design fundamentals. In total, he completed five formal courses in addition to his readings.

The other associate who participated in the pilot completed online programs only, mostly from WebJunction. Her primary job responsibility is to work at the reference desk, where she engages in heavy public service contact work. She attended programs on coping with change, sexual harassment, dealing with angry patrons, overcoming conflict, and community engagement. She also completed programs on improving library skills, including idea management for libraries and embracing future challenges for libraries. The associate found an ACRL/Choice webinar on the role of the library in student development to be extremely relevant.⁵⁴ She completed eight programs during the six-month pilot.

The commonality between the reference workers was their interest in programs most directly related to their job duties. The associate whose job is primarily instructional assistance completed programs in that area. Similarly, the associate, whose major responsibility is to cover the reference desk and to deal with the public for extended periods most days of the week, focused on developing coping mechanisms for working with the public. Both participants found the program to be beneficial and supported implementation of a formal library staff self-directed training program.

Self-Directed Training at ODU – Implementation of a Program

Rollout and Timeline

After reading reports and recommendations from the Acquisitions & Preservation Services Unit and the Reference Department, the Staff Development Team met several times to develop a final proposal for a Library Self-Directed Training Program. The Team's end product was submitted to the Library Management Team for review in early June 2016. The Library Management Team, composed of the University Librarian, the Administrative Services Librarian, two Associate University Librarians, three department heads, and the Learning Commons Manager, approved the Staff Development Team's plan. The target date for live implementation was July 1, 2016.

The Team developed the following timeline:

June 2016

- Staff Development Team sends e-mail to supervisors detailing their responsibilities
- Staff Development Team sends e-mail to library staff detailing timeline and initial program launch
- Staff Development Team gathers resources and makes the resources public in SharePoint
- Staff Development Team provides staff with a link to the program's Self Directed Training Log
- Staff Development Team meets with Management Team to answer questions and review model details before initial launch
- Program coordinator appointed and trained

July 2016

- Two Launch Workshops to be conducted for staff by Staff Development Team
- Department Heads meet with unit supervisors and other directs to review the program
- Supervisors enroll interested employees in the program and notify the program coordinator
- Supervisors hold initial meetings with supervisees to discuss training plans and ideas
- Supervisors begin receiving monthly updates from program coordinators
- Supervisors begin regular meetings with supervisees to discuss what participants have learned from their program

August 2016

- Initial Self-Directed Training Logs pulled by Program Coordinator and sent to Department Heads and Supervisors

October 2016

- Re-launch of program to recruit new participants
- Possible new marketing approach, additional workshops, etc.

August 2017

- Program assessment

During the first week of July, the Staff Development Team hosted several staff discussion sessions about the program. After those sessions, the Chair of the Staff Development Team met with the Library Management Team to review the proposed model and share feedback from the launch sessions. Department heads met with their units to explain the model in detail, answer questions, and address concerns.

Basic Model

The ODU model provides library employees up to three hours per week to pursue skill development and/or knowledge. Training can come from a variety of sources: articles, books, webinars, online training programs, or any other mutually-agreed upon format between employee and supervisor.

...The ODU model provides library employees up to three hours per week to pursue skill development and/or knowledge.

The program is voluntary. Employees can complete training at any time during the week. Acceptable programs are defined as anything an individual can use on their own to gain or to refine skills or knowledge for immediate or future application. Generally, established programs like the campus's Leadership & Management Development Certificate Program that are already recognized and tracked by the University were not considered appropriate for the program. Suggested sources for program participants to consult include but are not limited to: Lynda.com, Coursera, YouTube, WebJunction, and the Library Juice Academy.

The program is intended to be a collaborative effort. The employee chooses topics and sources of their interests. After selecting a training program, the employee meets with her/his supervisor to discuss the training s/he is interested in completing, and an agreement is reached. The employee and supervisor then contact the Program Coordinator to let the Coordinator know about the employee's participation. The employee keeps track of the training and meets regularly with the supervisor to discuss what has been learned. The supervisor and employee together determine their meeting schedule.

The Program Coordinator maintains a list of employees who have opted to participate in the program. The Coordinator sends program participants a welcome e-mail confirming their participation, an overview of program requirements, and instructions about accessing and completing the Staff-Directed Training Log. The Program Coordinator removes employees from the list of program participants when they opt out of the program. The

Program Coordinator sends monthly updates about program participation to supervisors. Generally speaking, the Program Coordinator performs all administrative functions.

Desired Outcomes/Goals/Objectives

ODU's model is designed to give library employees maximum opportunity to improve and to develop their skills and knowledge so they can be more productive in their jobs. The program was designed to support learning that will benefit both individuals and the institution, but is not formally recognized elsewhere. Any kind of skill development is welcomed, but improving participants' ability to think innovatively is a priority.

Inclusion and sustainability are important goals for the program. The primary immediate objective is to cultivate staff buy-in so a firm foundation for the program can be established. Once a foundation is in place, action steps will be created to sustain the program beyond the first year.

Assessment Measures

The program will be assessed on two levels. The first will address whether the program model itself is effective. The second will evaluate whether self-directed training is efficiently meeting the skill development needs of employees. The program lends itself to several metrics of assessment both quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative measures may include a review of number of programs attended, number of participants, and number of training hours completed. Surveys of program participants are expected to be distributed. To date, no target measures have been established.

Qualitative measures will include group and individual interviews with program participants and focus group input. The Staff Development Team has discussed recommending tying program participation to performance evaluation, but did not include this as a final recommendation since the program is voluntary.

The program will be assessed after one year of implementation. After initial assessment is completed, more measured and weighted goals may be established. If so, Goal Attainment Scaling will be applied to evaluate the program.⁵⁵

Sustainability of the Project

Of primary interest to the Library Management Team and the Staff Development Team are the kinds of programs completed by participants. After the first year of implementation, the Staff Development Team will review training logs for programs of interest with the intention of offering programs with most staff interest on a more formal basis.

The first year target group is primarily professional associates. One goal of the Library Management Team and the Staff Development Team is to expand the target group to librarians, managers, and administrators. As part of its first year assessment, the Staff Development Team will discuss making participation mandatory for all staff.

Library Administration is committed to the self-directed training concept and intends to continue the program after the first year of implementation. Based on the Staff Development Team's first year assessment, the expectation is that staff will spend several hours per week in self-training, will provide useful feedback to enhance the program, and will have program participation comprise a component of their annual evaluation.

Like the Staff Development Team, Library Administration looks at the self-directed training program as one component of overall staff development, not as a replacement for current staff training. Instead it is perceived as a complement to current programs and one more component in a comprehensive effort to improve library staff knowledge and skills.

Conclusion

Anecdotal and empirical research indicate a positive correlation between self-directed training, self-improvement, and growth in employee skill development. Bolstered by that knowledge as well as by the fact that many other libraries have implemented viable self-directed staff training programs, the ODU Library Staff Development Team drafted a self-training model based largely on a prototype program developed by Tooele City (UT)

Library that was adapted by the GMU Library. After two units in the library completed a six-month pilot project of the model and provided feedback to the Library Staff Development Team, the Team refined its formal proposal to be “ODU Library” acceptable. The Library Management Team quickly and unanimously approved the Team’s revised proposal, and the program was launched July 2016.

First year goals are to instill a culture of employee buy-in and organizational support so that employees can improve their skills in creative thinking, critical thinking, and problem solving. Long-term goals have yet to be determined but will more than likely focus on increasing employee participation and program sustainability.

A mixed methods approach will be used to assess the program. For the initial year’s assessment, the primary metrics will be staff surveys and focus group meetings with program participants. To this point, no benchmarks have been established. After year one, benchmarks will be created, and Goal Attainment Scaling will be used to evaluate the program.

Assessment is important, but may not capture many of the intangible benefits of self-directed training, such as employees developing a more vested interest in their individual skill development. Not meant as a replacement for current training programs in place, self-directed training is perceived as another way for library workers to improve the knowledge and abilities they have already developed over the years. By and large, ODU library administrators and managers are committed to the concept of self-directed training because they are convinced that self-directed training will provide additional opportunities for their employees to develop the skill set necessary to meet library and information literacy challenges of today and beyond. The challenges are great, but the rewards are expected to be greater.

...First year goals are to instill a culture of employee buy-in and organizational support so that employees can improve their skills in creative thinking, critical thinking, and problem solving.

Rob Tench (ftench@odu.edu) is the Acquisitions & Preservation Services Librarian at Old Dominion University. As supervisor of a unit that participated in the ODU self-directed training pilot, he had a bird’s-eye view of the project.

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Notes

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REFBACKS

- There are currently no rebacks.

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