

Managing Management — You Are Not Alone

by Brenda Dillon

Again and again, in workshops and professional literature, I'm told that my focus as a teacher-librarian must be teaching. If I want to be taken seriously as a teacher, understood as someone who's more than a shelver of books, then I shouldn't be seen spending my time processing materials, organizing and labeling shelves, shelving books, filing, taking care of administrivia.

It's a nice theory. And I agree – theoretically. But the reality of my life in the school library and, I suspect, the reality for many of my colleagues, is that I can't provide a good program unless a sound foundation has been created and is maintained. And that foundation is everything we tend to lump together as *management*.

So, how to *manage management* in such a way that we have the time and energy to do the more important things?

First, each of us must realize that we are not alone in this struggle. We're part of a community with a great deal of collective experience, expertise and wisdom. Do yourself a favour – don't reinvent the wheel (or the filing system!). Learn. Teach. Share.

Where to begin? Start here...

SUGGESTIONS

- Be an active member of your local association/subject council. If you're a new T-L, take advantage of the experience of those in the best position to know how things work in your school district. If you're an experienced T-L, offer this experience to your new colleagues.
- Look for and take advantage of opportunities to work with a mentor or to serve as a mentor. And remember, you don't have to know absolutely everything about everything to be a good mentor.

- Take advantage of professional development opportunities, even if it does mean being out of school or attending sessions during the summer. The time will be well spent.

- Participate in the wider world of school librarianship by joining associations, reading journals, joining listservs, and taking advantage of the many internet resources available.

RESOURCES

Associations

Ontario School Library Association

Membership in the Ontario Library Association is worth the money. Check out the links to other associations on the OSLA website. Even if you don't join the associations, do take advantage of their websites.

<http://www.accessola.org/osla>

Journals (print)

In addition to the journals published by the various associations, you might want to check out the following titles.

Library Talk (elementary), **Book Report** (secondary) – both from Linworth

Note: In January 2003 a new pre-K – 12 title, **Library Media Collection**, will replace both **Library Talk** and **Book Report**. See the Linworth website for more information.

<http://www.linworth.com>

Teacher Librarian

Edited by Ken Haycock, this joint Canadian/American publication is from Rockland press. See the TL website for more information.

<http://www.teacherlibrarian.com>

Journals (online)

Online journals are a valuable supplement to print journals.

The Informed Librarian Online

Take advantage of a free subscription to