

Summary



Talent Management in Libraries!?! / How Library Staff Can Be Motivated (Petra Düren)
(pp. 24– 27)

Repeatedly libraries have had to extend the deadlines for job applications, and sometimes, after a long search, positions have had to be filled with someone with different professional training. The »War for Talents« has reached the library world. This article deals with the methods of talent management that help to retain valued staff members and find new employees with suitable training. In order for talent management to work well in libraries, it needs to fit in with the particular institution's culture, the needs of the individual staff member, the specific strategies of personnel management and the capacities and strategic goals of the library. Moreover, its application needs to be exemplified in library leadership.

And talent management is not simply synonymous with personnel management or professional development, but rather goes beyond that. Recommendations for personnel management in connection with talent management include the following: providing involvement in projects, and later project leadership; enabling job rotation; professional development in the workplace through appropriate tasks, learning opportunities, interaction with colleagues and the strengthening and expansion of personal competencies; creating and implementing a development programme; developing or revising feedback instruments; individualised training courses, workshops, etc.

According to a study, libraries which do not use talent management lack the necessary expertise, sufficient personnel and funding, and are thereby unable to introduce this programme. On the whole, however, libraries are on course to use talent management – though often only partially – in order to find and retain well-qualified staff members who fit the needs of the library.

Library Assistants 2020 / Good Employment Chances in a Multi-professional Setting (Karin Holste-Flinspach)
(pp. 28 – 30)

In Germany qualified library assistants (»Fachangestellten für Medien und Informationsdienste«, FaMI) make up the largest segment of mid-level library employment. It is the only job in libraries which involves dual vocational education. The FaMI job market is currently becoming a supply market. Employees born between 1950 and 1960, the baby-boomer generation, are gradually retiring, but the number of applicants for their jobs is significantly lower. The increasingly critical lack of qualified professionals in the general job market is leading to extensive advertising campaigns seeking to attract new trainees, with costly benefit packages and job guarantees. This presents a particular challenge for libraries. New strategies are urgently needed in order to position the library to attract job trainees with attractive employment conditions.

Retention of trainees at the conclusion of the training period depends upon the job market. Counterproductive factors include the tariff groups for public service employment; working hours that are incompatible with family life; relatively low chances for promotion; fixed-term contracts and uncertain chances of achieving job security. Employee retention can be encouraged by offering non-cash benefits such as public transportation tickets, reduced admission fees for public facilities (swimming pools, museums, theatre), or arrangements for working from home.

In summary, there are good employment chances for the qualified library assistants. Their future prospects arise from ever more challenging areas of activity. In the job market the junior staff will see further advantages develop due to demographic change, the age structure of library staff, and the lack of qualified applicants in general.

Opening up to Diversity Creates New Opportunities / Despite Resistance: The Process of Opening up Libraries is Already Being Taken for Granted (Denise Farag, Ruth Hartmann)
(pp. 52 – 57)

Germany's Federal Cultural Foundation (»Kulturstiftung des Bundes«, KSB) provides support to 39 institutions in opening up to diversity within their organisational structures. The goal of the programme is help cultural organisations address cultural diversity in terms of their programmes, target audiences and personnel, so as to reflect better the diversity of their urban environments. The four-year project involved adding experts in this field to the institutions involved – including municipal libraries.

Above all, it was expected that appropriate measures would be implemented as soon as possible. But the initial steps to be taken would have to be tailored to the needs of each institution, since the needs and starting point were different everywhere. The City Library of Heilbronn, for example, gathered data about its adult users. The survey questions asked about a migrant background and the use of other languages in daily life. In the city of Heilbronn the proportion of adult residents with a migrant background is 49.3 percent. The survey found that the proportion of library users with a migrant background was 37 percent. This shows that the library attracts users no matter what their ethnic heritage is. Establishing a statistical foundation, however, can only be the first step. Determining whether and what specific services are needed requires the use of further analysis based on user participation. In Heilbronn a programme of events called »Sharing Culture« (»Kultur teilen«) was initiated. Members of different communities were involved from the beginning in the planning and development of the evening programmes. Content, scheduling and self-description of participants were mutually agreed upon. In this manner it was possible to gain access to the various communities.

Translated by Martha Baker