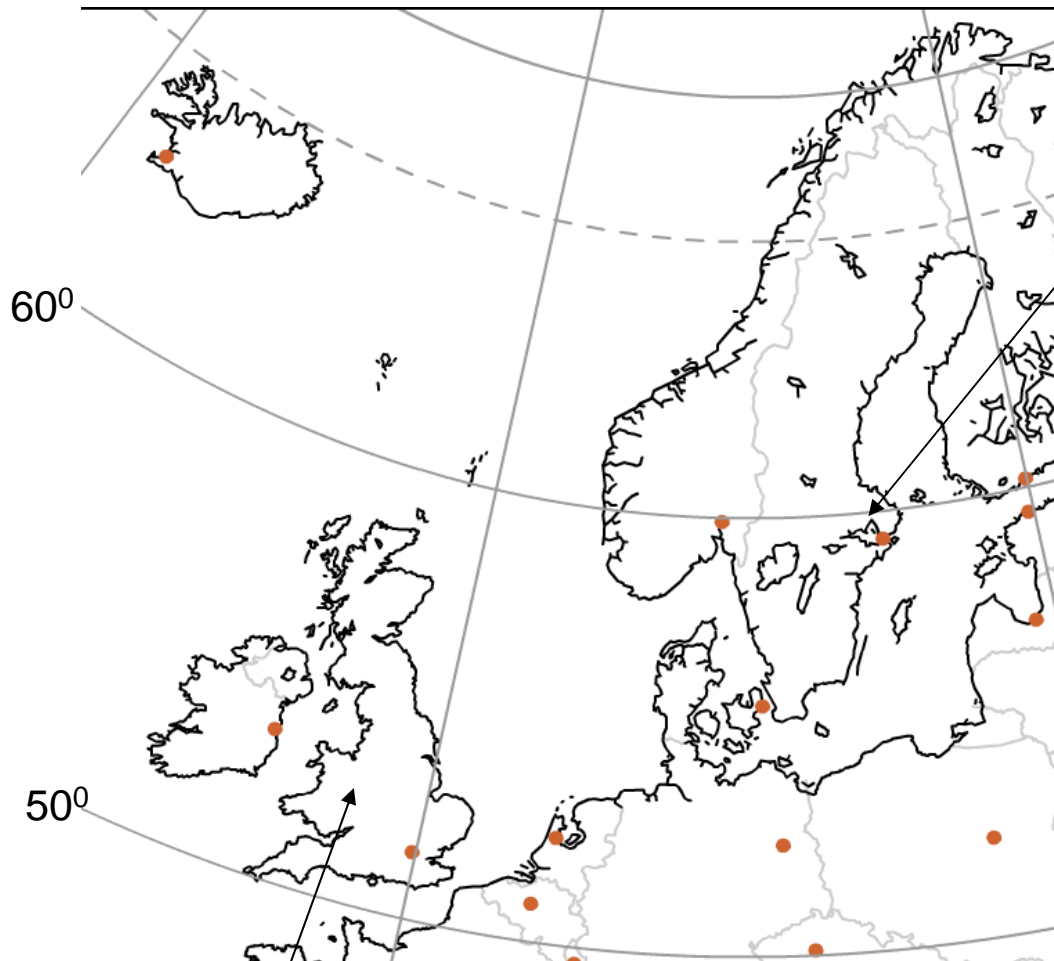Uppsala
Sweden

Anders Celsius
1701-1744

Carl Linnaeus
1707-1778

Carl Peter Thunberg
1743-1828

Dag Hammarskjöld
1905-1961

Shrewsbury
England
Charles Darwin
1809-1882

60⁰

50⁰

UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET

http://maps.hist-geo.com

Roles and Identity

Staff Development at Uppsala University Library

Sue Dodd
November 2006
http://www.ub.uu.se/uub_eng.cfm

Why staff development is important
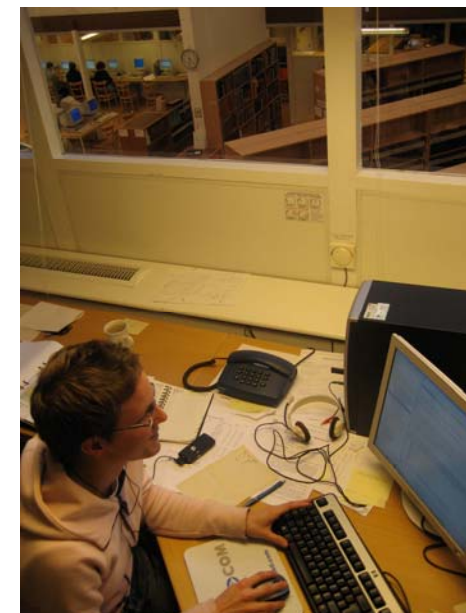

Ever-changing roles!

Staff Development Programmes 2005

Managers Programme

Leadership Programme

Senior Programme

Roles and Identity

Roles and Identity

1   library management must be clear about the Library's identity and mission

2   individual librarians need to have a strong, professional identity

3   every member of staff must be comfortable with his/her role in the organisation

A question of professional identity

Roles in the Library

The Librarys's goals
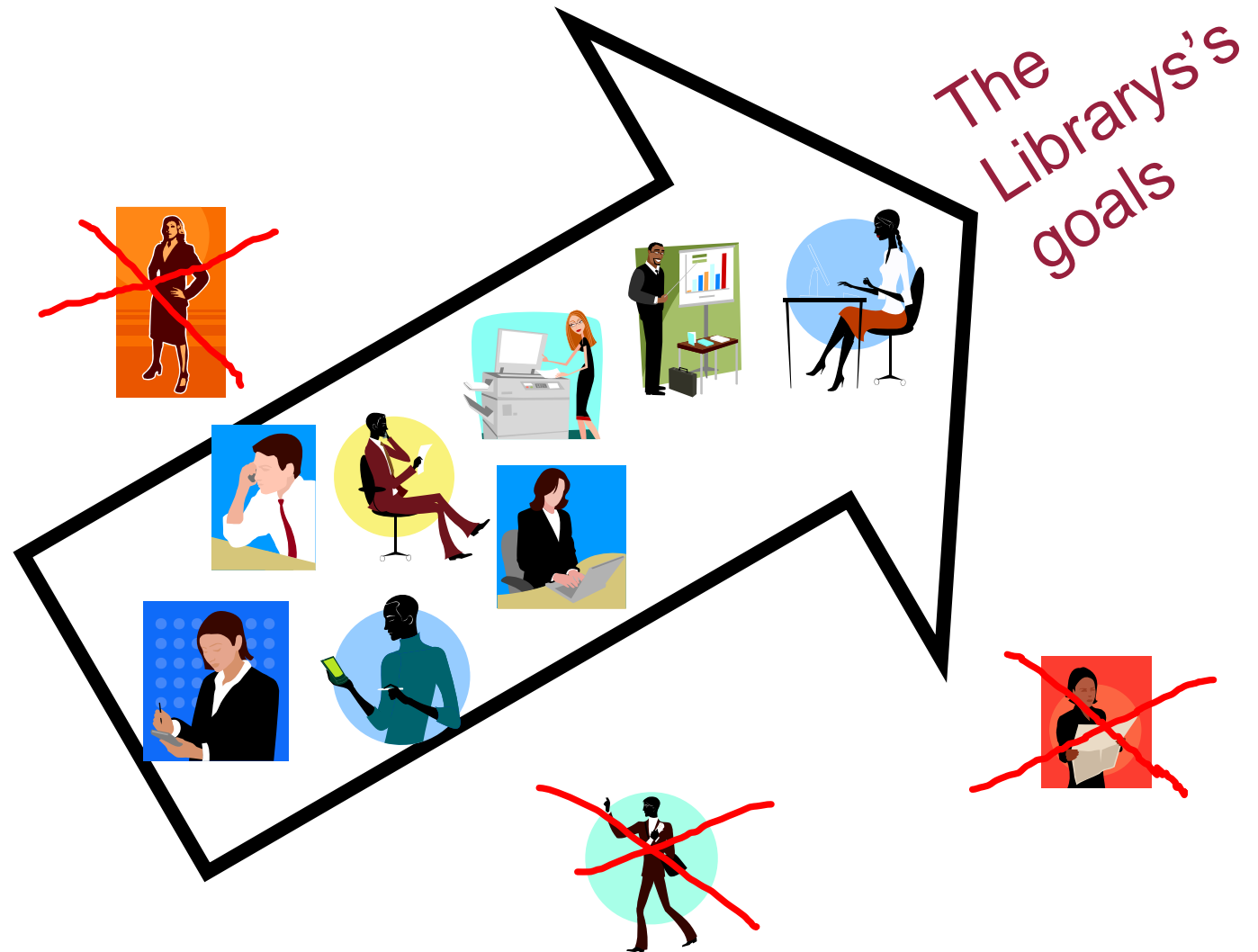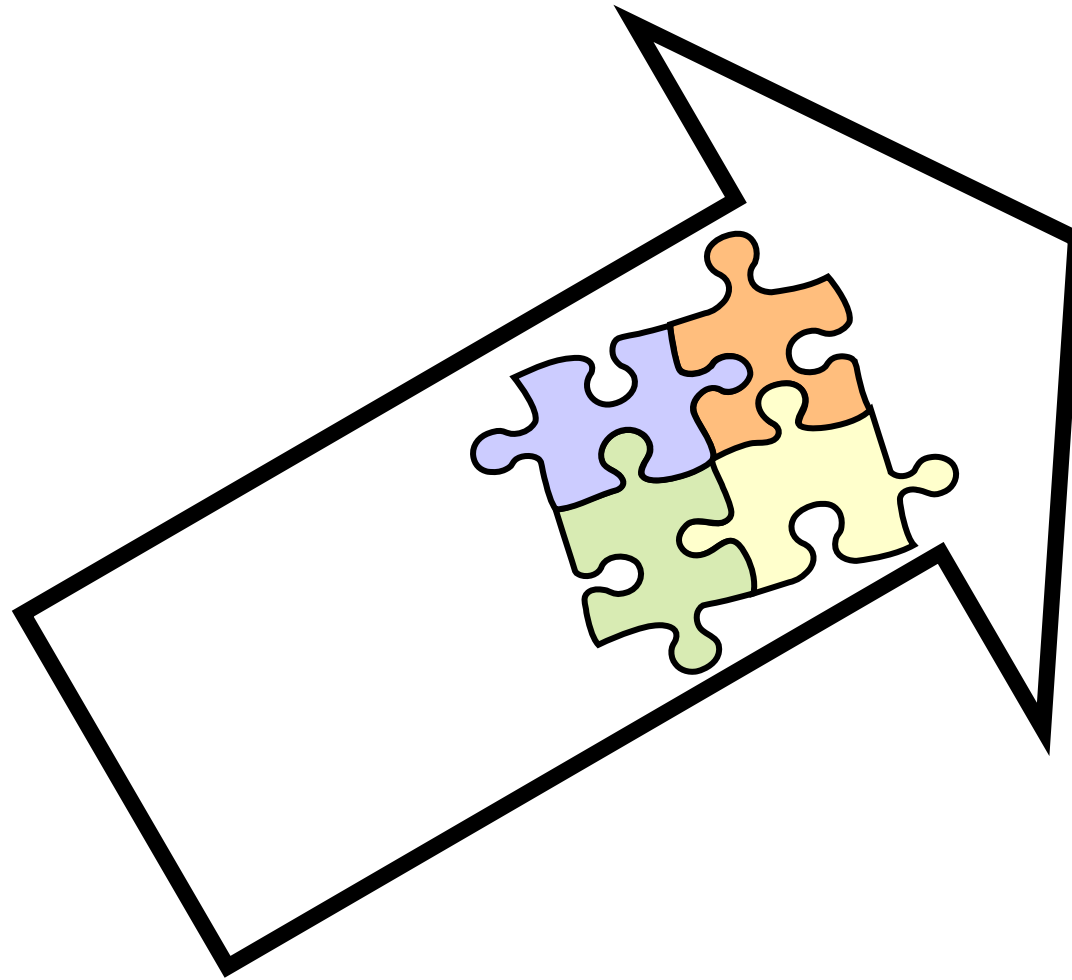
How to work with roles and identity?

Other initiatives that define roles

- Bologna Process
- Journals Club
- Book a Librarian
- Meeting disabled users
- Coping with difficult situations
- Coaching

Thank you
and
welcome
to Uppsala

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Staff Development 2005

Management and Generational Change

Three programmes, each one year long, formed the thrust of the Library's Executive Board's commitment to working strategically with generational change: these were the *Management, Leadership* and *Senior Programmes*. One third of each Library Group's annual budget for competence development was assigned to the two big programmes (*Management* and *Leadership*). This resulted in 6,000 kr. per participant and the programmes managed to keep within their budgets thanks to the University's own teachers who proffered their services at academic rates and thanks to the University's Section for Competence and Organisational Development who recommended other good and inexpensive lecturers.

The Management Programme

The aim was not only to improve management but also to rebuild a feeling of belonging together with *common values* and *common visions for the future.*

The Participants

All except one manager participated. The programme began with 28 managers, but during the year two of the group retired and one new manager was employed late in the year. He did not participate in the programme nor did the Library Director who however participated in another management course in September. Attendance was relatively high for a group consisting of managers: 80% attended all eight sessions, or missed only one. Three people attended only two or three sessions.

The Programme

The programme began with a two-day seminar at Lejondal's Castle in January arranged by library consultant Jakob Harnesk. The rest of the programme consisted of one half-day a month on seven occasions with different topics. Originally there were to be eight sessions but the one planned for February had to be cancelled because of the non-availability of a lecturer. The content of the programme which was tailored to the wishes of the participants, consisted of the following topics: the role of manager, conflict resolution, marketing, annual individual assessment talks, the working environment, project work and meeting techniques.

   Various lecturers were invited to the half-day sessions. On three occasions half the time was devoted to the lecture and the rest of the time was spent discussing the theme of the day in relation to Uppsala University Library. The other four lecturers (on conflict resolution, annual individual assessment talks, project work and meeting techniques) were unwilling to restrict themselves to less than half a day.

   The programme finished in December with a half-day spent reviewing the programme as a whole. In response to requests there was an additional session together with the Leadership Programme. This consisted of a structured discussion followed by a social get-together.

Evaluation

Individual and group evaluations were carried out. In addition the managers' group reviewed and discussed the group evaluation carried out by the leadership group at their final session a couple of days earlier. Permission had been obtained from the participants in the Leadership Programme.

The Managers' Group Evaluation

- The will to perceive Uppsala University Library as **one** entity exists but it was considered not unproblematic. The organisational model used at Lund's University where each library belongs to the faculty or department it serves, was not perceived as better, but to some extent easier to manage.
- The group wished to continue. A decision was made to meet for half a day each term. There should be a topic with a lecture followed by a discussion within the group.
- It was deemed important that the Library Director should participate in these meetings
- The discussion on the value of competence development led to an agreement that those managers that were willing would function as mentors for new employees within the Library
- The participants felt empowered by the course. "Knowledge provides consciousness and reflexion."
- The very fact of meeting regularly within this group was appreciated
- Some people felt that the programme could have been compressed into a cohesive block or at least concentrated to a six-month period
- There was a suggestion to provide training for special groups, e.g. new or experienced managers

The Leadership Programme

Aims

- To improve leadership
- To awaken interest and to increase knowledge about leadership and management skills
- To stimulate reflexion of one's own role (now and in the future) and awareness of one's own strengths and weaknesses
- To create a platform for discussion about leadership with Uppsala University Library

The Participants

The participants signed up. There was no selection. The group consisted of 27 people from the five Library Groups (seven from A-Group[1], five from B-Group[2], nine from Linnaeus-group[3], two from the Cultural Heritage Group and four from the Group for General Library Services). Twenty-one of the participants work as librarians, six with other duties; conservation, photographic services, digital publishing and finance. The attendance rate was 93%.

The Programme

The programme began with a two-day seminar at Friibergh's Manor in January arranged by library consultant Jakob Harnesk. The rest of the programme consisted of one half-day a month (eight occasions) with different themes: quality, types of organisations, planning,

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[1] The Library Group for Humanities and Theology
[2] The Library Group for the Social Sciences
[3] The Library Group for the Science and Technology, Medical and Pharmaceutical faculties

conflict resolution, marketing, project work and the working environment. Before each meeting the group was given a chapter to read from the course book *Library and Information Center Management* / Robert D. Stueart, Barbara B. Moran, 6 ed., Greenwood Village: Libraries Unlimited, 2002. Various lecturers were engaged and the theme of the day was usually followed up by discussions within the group, relating to the work of the Uppsala University Library. The programme ended in December with a half-day spent reviewing the programme as a whole. In response to requests there was an additional session together with the Management Programme. This consisted of a structured discussion followed by a social get-together.

Evaluation

Individual and group evaluations were carried out. The participants were very positive about the programme and the individual evaluations reflect much in the group evaluation, e.g. the participants appreciated the chance to get to know colleagues from other parts of the organisation, they gained a clearer understanding of the Library's activities, they realised that similar questions were being discussed in the different libraries and in general they felt empowered by the programme.

The group listed some points that they wished to communicate to the managers:
- Give clear guidelines
- Work with "real" projects in order to minimise excessive workloads. Identify an "orderer" and provide the necessary resources
- If possible co-ordinate the co-ordinators within each Library Group in order to simplify collaboration between Groups
- Each member of the management groups should see themselves as **part of a group** and support each other. Too often members seem to be representing themselves or their sub-group. This concerns not only the Executive Board but also the managerial groupings within each Library Group
- Be more specific about your visions. In which direction do you want our activities to proceed? Give us leadership so that we all have the same direction.
- Use ideas from the floor e.g. for visions of the future
- Don't relinquish responsibility to the Library Committees, rather use their wishes as a basis for your own plan of action for the library
- When recruiting new staff consider the kinds of competences that are needed (not necessarily librarians)
- Make conscious use of the cross-groups[4]
- Work towards a feeling for Uppsala University Library as **one** organisation e.g. with common rules
- Abolish the practice of vacancies only being open to staff within the same group

The Senior Programme

The Senior Programme arose as a reaction to the worry, both from younger and older staff, about possible problems when so many competent colleagues retire within the next few years. There is no chance for staff overlap because of financial restraints.

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[4] There are several groups that consist of staff from 3, 4 or 5 of the Library Groups, e.g. for co-ordinating cataloguing, library instruction, inter-library loans.

The aims of the Senior Programme were to:

- Identify competencies that should be replaced
- Expose and document tacit knowledge
- Expose possible problems
- Plan for the future

The Participants

All staff over the age of 60 were invited to participate in meetings once a month starting in March. There were 3 meetings during the spring and the programme reached 15 people (of 53). Several members of staff de-selected themselves with the motivation that "I have nothing to contribute". The group ended up consisting mainly of managers and others with positions of responsibility.

The Programme

Each meeting had a theme but the size of the group contributed to an informal atmosphere that allowed other matters to be aired. This was considered as a strength since the work involved largely uncharted waters. The meetings all finished with individual evaluations and suggestions that formed the focus of the following meeting.

Evaluation of the programme

In order to evaluate the programme I chose to use the aims listed above as the starting point.

Identify competencies that should be replaced
There was a high level of linguistic skills among the participants. All had some skills in English, French and German, two people knew Spanish and Latin and one person had knowledge of each of the following: Greek, Finnish, Italian, Dutch, Icelandic and Semitic languages.
  Areas of specialist subject knowledge were Geology, the Middle East, the Cultural Heritage collections, the systematic catalogues, the Swedish collections and special databases.
  All had good knowledge of the buildings, the stacks, storage areas, users etc. that is often lacking with the younger staff.

Expose and document tacit knowledge
It is difficult to access tacit knowledge, particularly with a group who have been working together for several decades. Various techniques were used, e.g. all participants were given a notebook for the purpose. We came to the conclusion that mirroring against contacts from outside the Library is one of the best ways and that the most interesting groups in this respect were students on work placements, part-time evening staff, colleagues from other institutions or departments. A focus group consisting of a number of younger librarians within Uppsala University Library asked for manuals and crib-sheets, particularly for dealing with reference questions about the older collections.

Expose possible problems
Dialogue and discussion were used to expose possible problem areas. One suggestion from the focus group to identify competencies was specific information on "Who can what?" and "Who is in charge of what?". The focus group also asked for information on

Library premises e.g. storage areas, both general and for instance within Medicine. Where are they and what do they contain?

The Senior Group felt that collaboration and mixing within the organisation is a good way to expose possible problems. They advocated courses, breakfast meetings, temporary staff exchange (e.g. for competence development of computer skills within the Cultural Heritage Group) and mentoring.

Plan for the future
Dialogue, courses, meetings, work rotation and work practice were felt to be useful methods.

Conclusions and recommendations

Due to a heavy work load under the autumn of 2005 I handed over The Senior Programme to Viveca Halldin Norberg, former manager the Cultural Heritage Group and now semi-retired. It was difficult to role models. Libraries in Sweden have mostly been using mentor programmes. An attempt at the Department of History at Uppsala University led to some ideas about capturing tacit knowledge. The lessons learnt by the *Senior Programme* at Uppsala University Library are that what is needed is:

- a consciousness of the problem that considerable knowledge will leave the organisation through retirement
- a strategic effort to identify future lacks
- a structure and a method to remedy these

Consciousness raising
Dialogue and discussion on many different levels, oral and written, is probably the best way to raise the consciousness of colleagues to the considerable seepage of knowledge from the organisation over the coming years. The Senior Programme can be a driving force for such efforts.

A strategic effort to identify future lacks
Here too, dialogue and discussion may well be the way to reveal coming lacks within the organisation. The Senior Programme could initiate a strategy and plan of action.

A structure and a method to remedial measures
Several of these measures may be relevant at different times. Courses, seminars, work rotation, meetings and diverse activities can be arranged where in-service training is recommended. Alternatively recommendations can be made concerning recruitment, e.g. knowledge of classical languages will be seen as a merit. Certain information channels are important such as the web and the staff newsletter.