QLP News

Quality Leaders Project for Black Library and Information Workers

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Editorial

Welcome to the second edition of QLP news – the newsletter for the Quality Leaders Project for Black Library and Information Workers. It is an exciting time for QLP as we are on the cusp of a new phase in the development of this, now well-established, approach to combatting discrimination and social exclusion within a developmental framework. Previous phases of QLP development have included an initial feasibility study, completed in April 2000, and a pilot study completed in July 2001, while a comprehensive history of the QLP was published in volume 23 of the Library Management Journal. We are now in the great position of being able to extend and develop the QLP on a national basis through funding for a nationwide roll-out of the programme provided by Resource (The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries). This phase is being launched in July 2002, while further developments are already underway, for example a "Youth QLP" strand which will focus on the development of skills for the providers of services which meet the needs of children and young people is currently under discussion. The success of the QLP has been a function of the skills, commitment and hard work of those who have been involved in its development, as well as its effectiveness in tackling racism and social exclusion. We look forward to achieving even greater success as we prepare for the launch of this next phase and hope that you find the articles in this newsletter interesting and informative.

What is QLP?

The Quality Leaders Project (QLP) is an initiative that addresses the dual challenges of providing value for the Black communities and equal employment opportunities for library and information workers. The model was originally developed in the context of library workers, however, we see it as having very wide applicatbility across a range of public service provision contexts. The key propositions of QLP are that the meeting of unrecognised or under-recognised needs requires new or enhanced services, and furthermore, that new and enhanced services require new skills and know-how (including new management know-how). Acquisition of these new skills, through a tailor-made management development programme, will create a level playing field for Black and monority ethnic staff and thereby enhance their ability to reach senior management positions.

The QLP addresses a number of recent policy areas surrounding social exclusion and the provision of needed public services to Black communities, including the Roach and Morrison report and the Stephen Lawrence enquiry, as well as being located within a Best Value framework. The context of the modernisation and reform of public services through legislative frameworks such as Best Value and the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and Human Rights Act places an obligation upon public service providers to include measures ⇨

targeted specifically at the Black communities in Best Value performance plans.

QLP addresses this agenda through an innovative management development approach which has become known as "management development through service development". Workers are 'seconded' on to the scheme, but remain in their own organisations whilst engaged in a six-month, part-time or full-time program of work-based learning, structured around a development project. During this period, the learners develop a range of leadership and managerial skills and, at the end of the project, devise a service development proposal based upon original research into the needs of the local communities. If you are interested in finding out more about the QLP, please see the contact details below.

Further details about QLP are available from:
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QLP Looking For New Recruits On To Its Next Program

The next stage of QLP consists of a roll-out of the scheme on a national basis. Earlier phases of the program have established it as a feasible and effective means of developing services and staff and new participants are being recruited on to the scheme throughout July. The inputs to the scheme are relatively small for each organisation, but the outcomes are substantial. Within six months, participating organisations will have a fully developed Quality Leader and a well researched plan for a new or improved service for your Black community, based on community consultation. From the Quality Leader's point of view, the scheme provides a challenging, structured development opportunity which will equip them with new skills and know-how, as well as enhancing their profile at senior levels within their organisation. The new scheme is launched in July 2002, so if you are interested in joining, please contact Dr. Dean Bartlett at the University of North London's Management Research Centre, (contact details appear above).

London Libraries Development Agency Endorses QLP

David Murray, Director of the London Libraries Development Agency has endorsed the QLP. In a statement, he said that "Libraries play pivotal roles in today's society. But we can only continue to do this if we have talented leaders who reflect all of the communities we seek to serve. I believe QLP will be a significant step to achieving this." Mr. Murray's statement highlights the dual nature of the QLP model, which focusses upon the development of both services to the communities they servce, but also the development of individuals from those communities who are employed in library and information work.

QLP Receives Support From Resource, The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries, As Well As Endorsement From The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals.

As you are probably aware, the Quality Leaders Programme for Black Library and Information Workers (QLP) has been successfully piloted in Merton and Birmingham libraries. This programme has proved to be an effective mechanism for both developing Black library workers, and for developing a new or improved library service to Black communities. This programme, managed by the University of North London Management Research Centre, uses an innovative management development approach towards service development which is known as "management development through service development".

Caroline Lang, the Access Adviser for Resource (The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries) has urged chief librarians to join the scheme, not least because it can help to meet social exclusion targets in an Annual Library Plan and can form part of the six point plan for tackling social exclusion within the Public Library Standards. "Your service, staff and service users have a lot to gain from QLP and nothing to lose", she said in a recent letter that went out to all chief librarians, going on to remind potential applicants that the scheme "will be operated on a strictly first come first served basis, so I would urge you to apply straight away". Resource are providing funding for the next phase of QLP, involving ten library authorities, while CILIP (The Chartered Institue of Library and Information Professionals) fully endorses the QLP as part of its Continuing Professional Development Framework.

QLP Heading Towards Accreditation

Staff of the Management Research Centre at the University of North London are currently working towards formal recognition of the high quality training provided by the QLP by trying to get the programme accredited. The QLP steering group were very keen that 'graduates' of the QLP were equipped not only with the technical and more 'soft' management skills, but also with an accredited certificate which represents the significant amount of work-based learning which occurs (on a very steep curve). To this end, discussions are currently under way with respect to the best way forward to seek formal accreditation from a recognised learning institution, such as a University or College. Although these duscussions are at an early stage, the project manager, Dr. Dean Bartlett, is optimistic that accreditation is only a matter of time. "I have very high hopes that this approach to work-based learning will catch on and the first-mover advantage is therefore of significant value to quality-led teaching and learning institutions who are keen to develop greater links between college-based education and work-based learning", he said at a recent meeting with steering group members. "This optimism", he continued, "stems from confidence in the product – the QLP model of management development through service development is very strong, both in conventional training parlance in terms of the high degree of transfer of learning which has been demonstrated during piloting, and also in relation to the degree of satisfaction expressed by 'QLP graduates' and their employers".

Diversity Council endorses QLP

The Diversity Council recently endorsed the QLP and urged its members to participate in the scheme. In a statement, they said that "The Diversity Council wholeheartedly welcomes the extension of the Quality Leaders Project, and through its members will be urging employers to participate in the programme. The QLP pilot project in Birmingham and Merton has demonstrated the value and importance of developing Black library and information workers, both in order to overcomesome of the structural and institutional factors which bar Black librarians from career development and advancement, and in order to improve and develop library and information services to Black communities. These two strands are crucial to any attempt to overcome these challenges and the QLP has provided in a practical, imaginative and meaningful way, a model for future advancement in this field.

The Diversity Council's aims and objectives are to address many of the same challenges as the QLP. As such, the DC endorses the extension of the Quality Leaders Project, welcomes Resource's involvement in this initiative and urges library authorities to become involved in this important programme."

Birmingham's QLP Project

- by Geoff Mills (Head of Community Library Services, Birmingham Libraries)

The service development proposal that resulted from the Quality Leader Project in Birmingham recommended an on-going series of informal welcome sessions in libraries for people from African-Caribbean communities (the model can be applied to any community). The purpose is to introduce the availability of computer based resources in libraries, and generally promote the services available. New library users can be supported in choosing a pathway to their future use of the service, depending on their interests or needs. The sessions would be supported by power point presentations and the presence of a development worker.

Birmingham Libraries is planning to develop this service in conjunction with its work towards the Public Service Agreements. Birmingham has a performance indicator to increase the annual use of on-line library services, and a PSA to increase the usage to 300,000 by 2004. The funding will be used to employ two Community Development Librarians for 6-9 months to promote and enable access to libraries for people who are not aware of the opportunities provided by the People's Network. Their role will include a priority to reach groups hitherto socially excluded from using library service. The initiative will combine the proposal from the Quality Leaders Project with the Public Service Agreement targets.

In the last year our Quality Leader – Alan Lewinson – has been promoted and has moved from the Science and Technology service area in the Central Library to supervising the daily community library service in Aston Library – an important library in Birmingham's inner city – with an opportunity to put into practice some of the elements of the proposal.

Some thoughts about leadership – in theory and practice...

– by Patricia Layzell Ward

'Leadership' is an interesting concept. It is easier to recognise – than to describe in words. It changes over time ... Around the globe, in all professions, there is a concern about how to identify potential leaders, and provide the training and development experiences they need to operate successfully in this role. Until recently very little emphasis has been placed on training and development. We work at a time where the rewards for success can be very high, but also when being less than successful is not acceptable. That is the reality. One of the major strengths of the Quality leaders Project is that it develops leaders by providing a framework and the opportunity to test skills in a reflective learning situation. The thoughts that follow draw on some management gurus and the experience of leadership roles where there has been success and a failure...

To the gurus first. The start of the 21st century provoked a number of management texts that selected the best of the past which still has a message for today, and thoughts about the future. Warren Bennis has probably written more about leadership since the late 1950's than any other writer, and he has had a consistent message[1]. He places an emphasis on human relations. Leaders are made rather than born, it is not the preserve of those at the top of the organisation, and it is relevant at all times. It is not about control, direction and manipulation. Research carried out by Bennis identified four abilities that leaders need to develop. The first is attention – creating a compelling vision. The second is meaning – communicating the vision through the use of analogy, metaphor and vivid illustrations and taking this ability it is not surprising that some gurus write

of storytelling as being a powerful means of communication. The third ability is that of trust – the emotional glue that binds followers and leaders together. The fourth he called the "deployment of self" which moves beyond time management to self-knowledge, persistence, risk-taking, commitment and challenge and learning from failure. Leaders need a positive view of themselves, and not to expect constant approval and recognition.

Chowdhury[2] brought together a number of management gurus in *Management 21C: someday we'll all manage this way*, identifying the attributes of the next breed of leaders as being hard working, never satisfied, curious and persistent. One paper paints the picture of the Janusian leader who has two faces – one looks back to the past – the other looks to the future to take the best of the past into the future. Some of the thoughts from this collection: credibility, leadership is everyone's business, challenge is the opportunity for greatness, leaders focus on the future, being a team player, caring is at the heart of leadership – and believing you can make a difference. There is also another important point – that is the need to see the world in shades of grey, not black and white.

Experience plays a major part in developing leaders – no one can easily adopt a style which runs counter to their personality type. Experience also provides clues to working out what makes a 'leader' tick in a given situation. What is the organisational culture? What are the organisational goals, mission statement etc.? What is the economic climate? How high does the government place the service on its list of priorities? What drives success in an

organisation? Some of these factors emerge in some papers that appear in the *Harvard Business Review* for February 2002. (It is always worth reading, but this issue has several papers that touch on leadership).

Jack Welch features in an interview[3]. He is the archetypal US organisation man who ruled General Motors for many years, partly through the force of his personality and partly his dedication to the job. Bennis[4] discusses the interview and feels that tomorrow's leaders will not have the monomaniacal passion that was a feature of Welch's style. Rather they will be operating in less certain times, needing to have a broader perspective, be open to new ideas and have a better balance in their lives. (This latter need runs through many surveys of attitudes to work carried out in the UK).

Another paper by Sorcher and Brant[5] examines the way that leaders are selected concluding that what seems to be a good indicator of leadership potential, may be the opposite. Team players may be better deputies, those who are good public speakers may be less good at talking one-on-one, and ambition may be a better indicator of ego than of leadership skills. They advocate the use of group techniques in an evaluation by those who have worked with the potential candidate over time and in a variety of circumstances. A wide set of criteria can be used including such issues as integrity... One implication of this approach is that organisations need to take more account of succession leadership, or employ a longer process of evaluation for external candidates.

Two other papers in this issue are worth reading. Peter Drucker [6]argues that organisations need to develop talent, and give as much

attention to managing contract and temporary workers as they do with 'permanent' staff. This may strike a chord, as an increasing number of posts in the LIS sector are short-term today. Contract workers may have less access to training and lack fringe benefits. Bruch and Ghosal[7] offer a warning to beware the busy manager. In research stretching over ten years they found that 90% of managers squander their time in ineffective activities – managers and leaders need to have energy and focus...

From a selection of the writing on leadership ... to the experience. Perhaps the reason why we enjoy working with a particular leader, or manager, depends on the chemistry in the relationship. On reflection two fantastic leaders influenced my career and approach to leadership. Both believed in giving their staff freedom to do their job, took a personal interest in them – and their families, and had strong and outgoing personalities ... Neither were universally popular. But many of their staff were innovators and made things happen, but they were also 'allowed' to make mistakes along the way. The mistakes were accepted if 'learning' was the outcome – and boy, did you learn. Other bosses didn't have a 'presence', you didn't see them often or know what they were thinking ... about the organisation, or the staff – or at another extreme they were 'control freaks'. With these bosses many staff were less sure of their 'boundaries', whether they could innovate or even make suggestions... Yet I'm sure some of their staff were happier working with the quieter leader, the one who guided them more closely...

One of the benefits of having leadership succession is that staff appointed to a leadership role know the organisational culture and climate. Coming in from outside is difficult. The process of selection rarely gives either the employer or the candidate enough

information to know whether there is likely to be a good fit. In the post where I didn't succeed the information provided before the interview was limited and I relied on knowledge of the organisation some years ago, and the time spent looking at the organisation was very limited and the staff and I met for only an hour before the post was offered. On arrival I quickly found that I was a 'fish out of water' ... and so moved on ... That organisation needed, and got, better leadership than I could offer. And I had success in a different role that was much more enjoyable. The point that needs to be made is that sometimes mistakes are made, if they are, they need to be recognised and action taken. That doesn't mean ducking out of difficult situations – every leader faces them – and has to learn how to handle them. But adapting to a very different organisational culture 'the way we do things here' is not always easy...

Let's finish on a brighter note for here is a thought about another way to develop leadership skills. That is by observation - visiting other information and library services. Yes – we don't have time or the money, but they can be overcome. Professional bodies and other organisations offer travel awards or scholarships – and someone has to win them. You need a focussed topic – the delivery of services to ethnic minorities, innovative leadership training programmes etc. - some desk research and a proposal. At a simple level it might be an application to attend a conference – CILIP offers awards to first time attendees at IFLA. Consider going to the US to visit some services and attend the American Library Association conference, or go down-under and see what is happening in Australia and New Zealand... My first travel award came from the London & Home Counties Branch of the Library Association and was used to look at the way in which US public libraries carried out user surveys –

a topic of considerable interest in the UK in the early 70's. It was a journey across the US travelling through the middle of the country and looking at public libraries – large and small. It gave life to the reports in the literature and librarians discussed the up and the downside of their experiences. Much valuable information and experience was gained and many friendly helpful contacts are renewed at American Library Association conferences. Of all the conferences overseas the ALA mid-year is probably the best – a very wide choice of sessions to attend, an exhibition that generally gives some 3 miles of stands to explore, and with many US librarians attending for the first time it is less cliquish than the smaller European ones. ... and long distance travel gives time for reflection sitting in airport lounges – no distractions and plenty of coffee at hand!

I guess I'm arguing for reflecting on different approaches to leadership, through reading – and looking at them in action – and then working out which style will work for you and your organisation.

Notes
1. The overview of Bennis's thoughts on leadership was taken from Crainer, Stuart. *The management century: a critical review of 20th century thought & practice*. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 2000.
2. Chowdhury, Subir ed. *Management 21c: someday we'll all manage this way*. London, Financial Times: Prentice Hall, 2000.
3. Collingwood, Harris and Coutu, Diane. "Jack on Jack: the HBR interview", *Harvard Business Review*, 2002, Vol. 80 No. 2, pp. 88-94.
4. Bennis, Warren. "Will the legacy live on?", *Ibid*, pp. 95-99.
5. Sorcher, Melvin and Brant, James. "Are you picking the right leaders?", *Ibid*, pp. 78-85.
6. Drucker, Peter. "They're not employees, they're people", *Ibid*, pp. 70-77.
7. Bruch, Keike and Ghosal, Sumantra. "Beware the busy manager", *Ibid*, pp. 62-69.

Partnership Working

Working in partnership with other agencies and community groups is often a key element of QLP service development projects. In a recent report on partnership working in a local government context Dr. John Twineham, Research Fellow at the University of North London's Management Research Centre and author of the report, concluded that:

1. Partnerships in local government can be complex. They can consist of bundles of partnership working and complex sets of motivation. They can be fluid, and they certainly take many varied forms. Therefore, they require the development of new core competencies in local government management.

2. Managing partnerships, so that they are sustainable, appears to involve managing the tensions of combining tight/loose relationships. This calls for the development of negotiating skills and flexibility in managing different mechanisms for partnerships.

3. Managing partnerships in strategic terms can be focused on cost reductions or can be focused on value adding. The former may involve tackling weaknesses; the latter can be based on exploiting strengths. Local government managers need tools for carrying out systematic internal appraisals in order to identify the activities which create disproportionate costs and activities which contribute to value for the public.

4. The flow of net benefits from partnership working needs assessment and monitoring, and improvement goals need to be set when the results do not reach the targeted levels.

5. There is a need for careful management of implementation factors to ensure that the potential benefits of partnership working (control mechanisms, employees, learning, etc) are realised.

The QLP is a useful way to establish some of the skills for successful partnership working and, by locating QLP service development projects within a Best Value framework, some of the partnership working that can be required for such projects is more likely to be sensitive to the sorts of issues raised in Dr. Twineham's report.

QLP 'Graduation' Presentations

A key part of the QLP scheme is that individual Quality Leaders devise and deliver a service development proposal. As a conclusion to the scheme, QLP learners are invited to present their proposals to an audience of steering group members, local community leaders and other QLP participants, shown in the pictures.

The presentations mark the end of the development project and provide those who have taken part in the scheme an opportunity to present their ideas and mark the occasion in a special way as a form of 'passing out' parade, as well as giving those who have been involved in the scheme as mentors or advisers to see the fruits of their labour. Critical feedback from the audience gives the Quality Leaders one final opportunity to put the finishing touches to their service development proposals before they go forward to be considered for implementation.

Plans for a New Body to Deliver Equality

Plans are being drawn up to create a single body designed to deliver equality and fight all types of discrimination. The proposal is described by Cabinet Office Minister Barbara Roche as the "most significant" review of its kind for 25 years. Mrs Roche says it is not possible to have six commissions dealing with six separate strands of discrimination, including race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age and disability. A review of the role a single body could play will be completed within six months, with firm proposals to be revealed in the autumn.

Race equality in Employment

- by Alyson Malach

Decades of legislation around race equality has changed very little. How do we move on from here? What are employers doing to address the issue of under-representation of black and minority staff at all levels within their organisations?

I have been asking myself these questions for several weeks now. The reason being, that, since a very young age, I have found myself in a number of situations where there are no other people 'like me' no matter where I go or what I do.

Examples of this include:

Being the only black child in my primary school

Being the only black member of staff in five of the seven jobs I have held since leaving school (many years ago)

Being the only black person in attendance at meetings across the country

Being the only black candidate at interviews for jobs that are not specifically related to working with black communities.

I have also, only twice in my working life been promoted within an organisation. I have had to move on to other jobs to climb up the career ladder.
I find all of this unbelievable, I can't believe that anyone could get to the age of 45 years old and have spent at least twenty five, of, twenty seven years of their working life being the only black person employed in the organisation. How can we change this? Why after decades of race and equality legislation are black and minority ethnic people still under-represented in the workforce of this country, particularly at higher, better-paid levels on the employment ladder.

Black and minority ethnic communities in this country make up some 7% of the total population. In some parts of the country they represent a significant proportion of the local community. (and in some areas black and minority ethnic people are close to a 'majority'). For employers to interact effectively with their local communities and provide a service which meets local needs and priorities it is right and proper that their workforce reflects the make up of the local community they serve and draw their resources from.

Recruitment targets aim to reflect the proportion of the minority ethnic community locally. Wherever possible, for example with individual police forces and fire brigades, local targets have been set because recruitment takes place locally. However, some services, like the Probation Service, recruit more at the national or regional level, so targets on these bases are more appropriate.

However, the successful recruitment of minority ethnic staff as described above will be undermined if those staff are not retained. It is important, therefore, that targets are set for the retention of minority ethnic staff, and the rates of retention monitored. But these targets must take account of the structure of and circumstances facing each organisation. Overall, the targets set look to ensure that minority ethnic staff do not leave at a rate greater than white staff with the aim of achieving comparable periods of service.

To begin to address the issues raised here, employers should ask themselves some serious questions about the employment of black and minority ethnic people in their organisations. Do black and minority ethnic people apply for positions in their organisations, and if, they do, do they leave after only a short period of time? Why is this? Good employers also look closely at the faces at their meetings, on their committees, and at the wider picture of their entire work force, they ask who is missing, and how they can change this situation.

If you have found this article, interesting, stimulating or inspirational contact me (alyson@niace.org.uk) to discuss these issues further and to hear about strategies for attracting more and different people at all levels in your organisation.

Merton's QLP Project - Mitcham Area Community Resource Centre

- by Shiraz Durrani

Michael Junor, Merton's Quality Leader, proposed a service improvement proposal under the title *Mitcham Community Resource Centre* as part of the Pilot phase of the Quality Leaders Project. His proposal was that the Centre operate within Mitcham Library offering resources on health, Black history, community notice boards, display boards, enquiry desk. It would support community activities, meetings, training, exhibitions, promotions, conference space. The centre would contribute to the strategic objectives of Merton Libraries - Community Development, Lifelong Learning, Economic Regeneration.

At the end of the pilot phase of QLP, a group of senior managers taking the lead on the "community development" strand of the strategic objectives - Di Reynolds, Elizabeth Smallwood, and Raihana Ahmad, together with a member of the Strategy, Commissioning and Scrutiny team, Shiraz Durrani, examined Michael's proposal. They examined various aspects of the proposal, including viability, implementation and possible funding sources. In keeping with developments in Merton as well as nationally, the team decided to add some new, important aspects to the proposal. They also decided that the Project should serve the needs of all the excluded communities in the Mitcham Area as part of the needs-based service to be provided in partnership with other key stakeholders. The team subsequently prepared a 2-year funding bid which has been submitted to the London South Learning and Skills Council. The following section is taken from the application:

Mitcham Area Community Resource Centre proposal

The proposed service will address adult learning as well as provide basic skills for young people and adults. It will offer first rung learning opportunities aimed at developing the skills and confidence necessary to enable progression to more formal learning and skills development, and eventually to employment. The project thus complements work of the Merton Adult College, and offers a unique learning opportunity within the local area in that it focuses on those who are not yet at the stage where they feel able to apply for the more formal learning opportunities offered by the College.

The need for specific service to various excluded communities was identified by the Quality Leaders Project for Black Library & Information Workers (QLP) which is funded by Resource, The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries and conducted by the Management Research Centre of the University of North London. QLP is now a national programme for developing relevant skills of library staff while at the same time improving services to excluded communities whose needs have not been met up to now. Merton's Quality Leader carried out extensive community consultations and recommended that the needs of excluded communities in Merton can best be satisfied by establishing a Community Resource Centre. These proposals were subsequently modified by a group of senior library managers and are incorporated in the Project.

QLP-related Publications

MRC (2000) A Quality Leaders Project for Black Library and Information Workers - Final Report of Research Findings, Feasibility Study and Proposals. Management Research Centre: University of North London. 6 April 2000.

MRC (2001) An Evaluation of the Quality Leaders Pilot Project: A Pilot of Stage 2 of the Quality Leaders Project with London Borough Of Merton And Birmingham City Council 5th July 2001. Dr. Dean Bartlett. Management Research Centre. University of North London. *QLP News* No. 1 (July 2001).

Roach, P. and Morrison, M. (1988) Public Libraries, Ethnic Diversity and Citizenship. CRER: University of Warwick. British Library Research and Innovation Report no. 76.

Stephen Lawrence Inquiry: Report of an inquiry by Sir William Macpherson of Cluny (1999). The Home Office. Cm 4252-1.

Shiraz Durrani (2002) Combating racial discrimination in British public libraries: the role of the Quality Leaders Project, Library Management, Volume 23(1/2), pp. 23-52.