

InULA

Innuendo

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On the Job Change and Growth

Pat Steele

(Pat Steele is Acting Head, Education Library and Head, SLIS Library)

Will you be staying in your particular library for many years or even for your entire library career? This potential is quite likely in today's work world. With any long term tenure in a particular position, there is always the possibility of plateauing. Plateauing, or reaching a stage in your work life where vertical movement or growth is impossible, is not a new phenomenon; it is an increasing one. Between 1986 and 2015 promotions will become increasingly scarce and people will reach the plateaued state at an earlier age. The infamous baby-boom generation is swelling work ranks beyond the ability of organizations to raise workers up the ladder of success. In our culture, vertical mobility has been the symbol of success.

When people are not able to move up into positions of increased responsibility, there is a danger that stagnation, often referred to as "deadwood," can result.

Judith Bardwick, in *The Plateauing Trap*, outlines three plateaued states: organizational plateauing, in which the organization has stopped expanding and can no longer continually move workers up; content plateauing, in which the worker has become expert at his/her job and is bored; and life plateauing in which the person finds life no longer meaningful. This article will explore constructive responses an individual can make when faced with content plateauing.

There are things which we as individuals can do to challenge ourselves and keep from becoming "deadwood." One of the first things we can do is recognize the possibility of malaise and boredom which can result from a plateaued state. We can then take

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From the Editor

Emily Okada

(Emily Okada is Reference Services Coordinator, Undergraduate Library Services, IUB)

The Publications Committee is slowly growing; soon we'll have our first real meeting to plan future *Innuendo* issues and explore other committee activities. Committee members this year are:

Rebecca Cape, IUB
 Mary Krutulic, SLIS, IUB
 Anne McGreer, IUB
 Jean E. Miller, IU-Kokomo
 Karen Nissen, SHALSA (formerly, IUB)
 Steven J. Schmidt, IUPUI
 Caroline Smerk, IUB
 Nancy Totten, IU-Southeast

If you are interested in serving on the committee, contact me or any of the people listed above. If you have ideas for articles (even if you don't want to write the article) jot them down and send them to me or any committee member.

I hope you've noticed that, although the committee is growing, the *Innuendo* seems to be shrinking. Actually, copy is about the same, but physical size has, indeed, decreased. This will save InULA some money and will present a challenge to the committee's creativity. Change, growth in the non-physical sense, continues for the *Innuendo*. If you've got opinions/reactions to these changes, let us know.

Pat Steele's article in this issue is an adaptation of part of the presentation she gave at the recent Midwestern Federation of Library Associations conference held in Indianapolis. She offers constructive ways to cope with "plateauing" on the job. This article continues her exploration of career development and growth issues that began in her article "Up! Up! And Away?" in the February 1985 *Innuendo*. Pat certainly can serve as one of the role models she mentions in her article—someone who is "...clearly successful in motivating [herself]..." and who has created opportunities for growth and challenged herself to do more.

Sandy Marksberry's article on microcomputer maintenance continues the "tradition" started several issues ago, of offering "how to" articles that may be helpful to InULA members both on and off the job.

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Notes From InULA

Mary Popp, President, 1987-88
(Mary Popp is Instruction Services
Coordinator, Undergraduate Library
Services, IUB)

The current academic year is well underway. So is InULA's program year. We began with an entertaining, informative first program about library videotapes presented by Tom McNally, a nationally recognized expert in the field. The Social and Program Committee is hard at work planning an upcoming program on effective conference attendance. Not just for the first time attendee, this program will share ideas on making conference attendance more productive and satisfying (and fun).

The Continuing Education program this year will be a change of pace. InULA will co-sponsor, with the University Libraries, the annual system-wide Librarians' Day in Indianapolis. The day promises to provide information and an opportunity for sharing ideas.

A fund-raising activity to benefit InULA's scholarship program is also being planned. It seems likely that an extra benefit of this committee's work will be a logo for InULA.

As you can see, committees are getting organized and beginning their work. The committee chairs are listed below. We are contacting people who signed up when they paid their membership dues. If you are

interested in being part of one of these committees, but didn't sign up, don't be left out of the fun. We have a place for you. Give the listed chairperson or me a call.

Constitution and Bylaws

Kris Brancolini
Library Administration, IUB

Continuing Education

Maudine Williams
Herron School of Art, Indianapolis

National Library Week Book Sale

Fine Arts Library, IUB

Program and Social

Jackie Byrd
Cataloging, IUB

Publications

Emily Okada
Undergraduate Library Services, IUB

Ad Hoc Scholarship Fund-Raising

Mary Krutulis
SLIS, IUB

The deadline for the next round of Research Incentive Grants was November 30. There will be two other rounds this year. If you would like more information concerning the grants, please contact me.

Finally, I encourage you to keep in touch with me about any InULA issues that interest or concern you.

On the Job Change and Growth

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steps to make environmental changes that encourage an active and creative workplace.

Personal preparation can include:

- learning to become self-motivated
- becoming mentally prepared for change
- expecting change and viewing it positively
- setting goals and objectives for our work

Career goals and objectives give us a certain control over our lives as well as a realistic measure against which to assess risks. Also, goal setting demands a certain amount of discipline which is essential in an environment of change. It is essential because it helps negate passivity—a central component of the state of deadwood!

One goal we can set for ourselves is to learn more. Formal education, the pursuit of a degree, or taking advantage of the myriad opportunities for life long learning in the form of workshops or seminars does not have to be work-related. Anything which broadens or stretches is of value. Interestingly, studies have shown that the *process* of learning is often more satisfying than the content. Increased possibilities for change will occur as we gain more knowledge. Remember, too, that you can use what you learn in a number of ways. Write or volunteer to participate in a panel or give a talk. Commitment to write an article or give a speech can be a mighty motivator; it is very difficult to be passive when faced with a real commitment and definite deadline!

Professional involvement can also provide

a means to invigoration and renewal in our work lives. Involvement can come at a number of levels. Use contacts to get onto committees. Talk to people at meetings. Offer to help at any level. It may be necessary to start out on a committee which is not of primary interest in order to “pay your dues.” A common example is younger library faculty starting out on the social & program committees, “coordinating” the tea and cookies. Even in these committees, organizational skills are developed, contacts made, and more importantly, you can demonstrate interest and ability to follow-through and get the job done. If you do not find a group directly related to your concerns, you can start an interest group in professional organizations at any level—local, state or national. It can be surprisingly easy and highly rewarding. Such involvement helps you develop a network of people who can enlarge your contacts as they (and you) move and grow.

As you set your goals it may be helpful to adopt a role model. Observing others who are clearly successful in motivating themselves can be an education in itself. IUL is beginning to implement a mentor program to help young librarians work with such role models to create paths for success in professional development, creativity and service. The administration recognizes the benefit to the organization and the individual librarian of successful mentors and role models.

It is clear that success and active career enrichment is demanding. That discipline mentioned earlier becomes more and more important in success. Do not allow yourself to get stuck in a rut, combine creativity with discipline. For instance, in the area of research, set aside a fixed time for study. Study and investigation in themselves can help us develop ideas and identify areas we wish to explore in depth. In his book *Creativity for Librarians*, Dale Shaffer states that in the initial stages of questioning and sensing we should try to refrain from judgement. This advice dovetails very nicely with a technique espoused by Jana Bradley (currently on leave from her position as director of the library at DePauw University, she is a doctoral student at the University of Illinois) in her workshops on the research process. She encourages brainstorming without structure for a fixed time period in order to start the creative juices flowing and to help demonstrate to ourselves that we may have more to say on a subject than we ever imagined. It is easy to create artificial barriers by believing that there is nothing new to say or that someone else can say it better. Getting started on a new project is usually the main stumbling block to creativity so be as open and "creative" as possible in the early stages. Critical revision can come later.

What about the job itself? There are things which we can do to circumvent dry-rot in the workplace. Try using your skills in different ways. If you are good at editing, volunteer to work on the newsletter (*Innuendo*). If fundraising is your talent, organize an auction (InULA

Research Incentive Fund Auction) or a fun run (HPER Library fund raiser).

Look for new duties to add to your job. Rather than avoid more work, see if a new assignment can add to your knowledge or contacts. Keep in mind the three essential elements of a new job: exposure, visibility and growth. Always look for assignments which will present new, stretching situations and will allow an increase in professional visibility.

It is important to remember that work is only one of the compartments of our lives. Develop interests outside the work environment. A secondary career, a hobby, community involvement, among other things, can greatly invigorate your life. These "outside" interests can lead to other completely unanticipated career or research challenges.

Janet Near, Associate Professor of Business Administration at IU, finds many business managers happy with their plateaued position because they can focus on other activities. They may consequently spend less time at work, but it has been found that the time spent is more productive.

There is a positive way to look at the plateaued position. View it as a breather, a chance to reflect on what you are doing, a sign that you have accomplished one goal and that it may be time to investigate new challenges and possibilities. There need be no such thing as a dead end!

Bibliography:

Bardwick, Judith M. *The Plateauing Trap*. New York, American Management Association, 1986.
 Shaffer, Dale. *Creativity for Librarians: A Management Guide to Encourage Creative Thinking*. Salem, Ohio, 1973.

Tips on Microcomputer Maintenance

Sandra J. Marksberry
(Sandy Marksberry is Reference Technician, Undergraduate Library Services, IUB)

Microcomputers have become a fixture in libraries, both in offices and in public service areas. Their constant use leads to questions about care. What can the user do to promote the smooth functioning and uninterrupted availability of these machines? The following suggestions have been culled from knowledgeable micro users, journal articles, computer catalogs, and a Bloomington Academic Computing Services (BACS) workshop. This writer is indebted to Mike Hoffman, presenter at the BACS workshop, for his clarification of sometimes conflicting advice. He cautioned against buying expensive supplies from computer catalogs when the same task could be accomplished with supplies commonly used in the home or office.

1. Begin with a clean environment. Keep food and beverages away from the computer. Avoid smoking near the computer. Locate the machine away from extremes of heat and cold, such as direct sunlight, heat vents, and open windows. To prevent static build-up, use an anti-static floor mat or anti-static mat under the computer.

2. Protect your floppy disks. Store them in jackets so that they are not stacked on each other. Inspect each disk regularly by "peeking" through the half-inch wide slot in its protective enclosure. Streaks may indicate dust which warrants copying the data onto a new disk. Make back-up copies of all data. Keep diskettes away from magnets and from paper clips that have been in a magnetic holder.

3. Clean the disk drives regularly. If the disk drives are in use 4-6 hours per day, consider cleaning the drives every six months. Read/write problems may indicate the need for cleaning. Commercial disk-drive cleaners are adequate for this cleaning. If the cleaner has removable pads, use one time only. Non-removable pads may be used about 15 times. Manual cleaning is more thorough than using commercial disk cleaner and may be enjoyable for the mechanically inclined. If you have learned to clean your cassette player or VCR, you can clean the computer's disk drive.

4. Vacuum the keyboard and the vents along the bottom of the computer itself. Use a canister vacuum cleaner with a brush attachment (a home vacuum is fine). Vacuum twice a month, with the power off. Window cleaner sprayed on a cloth may be used to wipe off the keys. If a particular key is malfunctioning, pull off the cap that is

its cover and blow any dust out (this is possible with IBM PC's but not with all compatibles). "Canned air," which is available in camera stores, is often used for this purpose. (This product contains fluorocarbons.) Alternatives to blowing out the keyboard are dusting it with a clean camel's hair brush or with a lens cleaner (which has a small air pump and is available inexpensively at camera stores).

**Don't buy expensive supplies
from computer catalogs
when the same task can
be accomplished with
supplies commonly used
in the home or office.**

5. Monitor screens may be cleaned with window cleaner. If the monitor has a nylon-mesh glare screen, no liquid should be used. The glare screen may be vacuumed or "rolled" with a lint-remover roller.

6. Vacuum printers weekly. Clean the metal tracks on which the print heads slide back and forth. This can be done with a dry paper towel. Lubricate the metal tracks about once a year with a light, non-penetrating oil such as sewing machine oil.

7. Make sure your power supply is adequate. Variations in the power supply may include power surges and electrical spikes and glitches. Their presence may be obvious (as when equipment fails), but

there may be less obvious harm. Surge protectors are available from computer or electronics stores. Consult an electrician for more information about the power supply.

8. If a problem occurs, review the owner's manual, check plugs, and try to define the source through the process of elimination.

There's more, of course. Literature is available that describes troubleshooting techniques and repairs that can be done by the user. Take a look at *Chilton's Guide to Small Computer Repair and Maintenance* by Gene B. Williams. It is clear and amply illustrated with black and white photographs. A copy, which any Indiana resident may borrow, is available at the Eigenmann Library at IUB.

The following articles are helpful and are written with the micro user in mind:

Chamberlain, Michael B. "Taking the Sting Out of Computer Repair." *Office Administration and Automation*, July 1985, p. 48.

Williams, Gene. "Taking Care of the Small Computer: A Guide for Librarians." *Wilson Library Bulletin*, December 1986, p. 14.

**Indiana University Librarians'
Association presents**

**“How to Get the Most
Out of a Conference”**

Speakers:

**Julie Bobay, Kris Brancolini,
Sylvia Burbach, Lynn Smith.**

Topics Include:

Preparing for a Conference:

Choice of accommodations
Pre-registration
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Reading the Program
Committee etiquette
(How not to) meet people
Exhibits

Preview:

How to enjoy New Orleans

◆ **Wednesday, December 16th, 3:30-4:45 pm** ◆
3rd Floor Staff Lounge, Main Library, Bloomington
Refreshments will be served

ERRATA

Yes, this is only the second issue of the year.
volume 5, number 2.

No, the entire Fine Arts Library, IUB is not going to chair
the National Library Week Book Sale (p.3, "Notes from INULA").
Rosann Auchstetter, librarian in the Fine Arts Library will
chair this InULA committee.