New Librarians: Building Culture and Connections - Onboarding, Training, and Manuals

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New Librarians
Building Culture & Connections

Onboarding, Training, & Manuals

bit.ly/newlibrariantrainingmanual
Adam H. Lisbon
Japanese & Korean Studies Librarian

**Background:**
ESL / EFL teacher in the US and Japan. My job at CU-Boulder is my first full time library position.

Megan E. Welsh
Interdisciplinary Arts & Humanities Librarian

**Background:**
Early childhood education and one year at a small, rural academic library in upstate NY.
When we started our new jobs...

We thought our training & orientations could be improved...

and started investigating...

...and discovered we had questions & ideas others were researching.
What were our questions and ideas?

| | Should this be this hard, or am I not good at this? |
| | Who do I talk to about... |
| | Are other libraries this confusing? |
| | I don’t feel like I really know what I’m doing.... |
| | Isn’t there some kind of guide? |
Communicating with new employees

Graybill’s first chart: Libraries apply different tactics for communicating with and train new employees. Email is most common. While knowledge repositories like handbooks, portals, and FAQs are not as developed.

At CU, we do have some of these elements, but their use and maintenance is not applied consistently, nor is it clear how effective they are.

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Are other libraries this confusing?

Graybill’s second chart: Not all libraries implement the essential activities that onboarding & orienting literature recommend. (only 2 do nearly all of these)

At CU Boulder, we DO engage in many of these activities with our new employees. The question is how effectively we do it, and how well organized we are.

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What’s hard for new librarians?

Where are new librarians coming from? Especially those who are starting their first job as a librarian.

*how to get things done* was the undertone for a lot of complaints new hires had.

Oud, “Adjusting to the Workplace.” p 262.

**TABLE 7**
Hardest Thing to Learn Open-Ended Question: Major Themes

- Workplace politics/culture
- How to get things done
- Collection development
- Local procedures, resources, structures
- Time management/workload management
- Saying no
- Conflict management
- Relationships with faculty
What’s hard for new Librarians

Our guide was initially designed to address the more confusing points in our own orientation, but we have to understand from Graybill, Oud, and others that there are wide ranging onboarding and orientation issues that we hadn’t even considered. We will pursue how to integrate these weak spots to better welcome our new colleagues in the future.
What did we do about this?

1st Day

Insert a short description here. For example: Meet your supervisor, colleagues, and handle some basic paperwork. You will also activate a variety of online accounts that cover payroll, productivity, etc.

Task to be completed goes here

Colleague(s) to contact

Relevant webpage if there is one

A short description of the task may be typed here.

We made a guide with some help from our supervisors.

Then we had our guide approved as an official libraries document.

Now, we are researching how to make our initial idea better.
Get Keys
Human Resources
Human Resources contact
Receive keys to your office space and any other spaces for which you are responsible.

Create your Email Signature
Link below
Email Signature Guidelines
Create a standard email signature which will automatically be inserted at the end of all outgoing emails.

Set up your Office Phone
Links below
Voicemail Instructions
General Phone Instructions
Review the instructions to setup your voicemail. Ask a colleague to call your office phone to verify that your phone extension is correct and to test your voicemail. Identify how to call long distance.

ILS Log-In Credentials
Your Supervisor
No Linked Resources
Request the credentials for the Integrated Library System (ILS).
Our research questions...

1. How effective is the New Libraries Faculty Guide?

2. What are Faculty and Staff attitudes about the guide?

3. What do Libraries Faculty think about orientation and onboarding practices at CU Boulder?
From whom and how did we gather data?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Number/Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newest Librarians</td>
<td>Individual Interviews</td>
<td>3 of 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Librarians</td>
<td>Focus Groups</td>
<td>5 of 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran Librarians</td>
<td>Focus Groups</td>
<td>6 of 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisors</td>
<td>Google Form Survey</td>
<td>8 of 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Libraries Faculty &amp; Staff</td>
<td>Google Doc Comments</td>
<td>100 comments; 175 possible participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Libraries Faculty &amp; Staff</td>
<td>Final Call for Comments</td>
<td>2 comments; 175 possible participants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How did we analyze our data?

Coded comments as...

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative
- Constructive
Google Doc Comments

Number & Nature of Comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Feedback</th>
<th>Number of Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>positive</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neutral</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negative</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constructive</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Google Doc Themes & Conclusions

- Typos & formatting
- Need for details
- Positive Comments
- Shifts in responsibilities
- Volunteers
"The CU Libraries, as a whole, has done an effective job training new employees."

- Strongly Agree: 38%
- Agree: 50%
- Disagree: 12%
- Strongly Disagree: 0%
Supervisor Questionnaire

The responses...

- Focused on the guide
- Overwhelmingly positive (31 positive comments)
- Only 3 constructive comments

The conclusions...

- The guide is easy & helpful (for supervisors and new faculty),
- Need customization options for different departments
Open comments

Responses:

“...thanks for adding this!”

“My immediate supervisor did very little to assist when I joined the Libraries faculty.”

Conclusions:

- Not effective for gathering much additional data
- Comments were consistent with the rest of the research: expressing gratitude and the need for new employee training.
Interviewees actually used the guide to get settled at CU.

1-on-1 Interviews

The Guide
- Succinct, Subtext, Connecting
- Roles, Division of Time, Mission / Pay

Libraries Orientation Procedure
- Lunch
- Training, Basics, Prep-work
Focus Groups

New Librarians hired in the last 3 years
+ Veteran Librarians working more than 3 years

The Guide

- Structure, Manageable, It Exists!
- Roles, Division of Time, Accuracy, Customization

Libraries Orientation Procedure

- Lunch!
- Solo, Training, Basics, Prep-work
Big Picture Data:

Positive, Negative, & Constructive Comments: Totals
(Interviews & Focus Groups Combined)

Comments about Orientation

Number of Comments

- Campus
- Libraries
- Guide

- Positive
- Negative
- Constructive
Big Picture Data:
Positive, Negative, & Constructive Comments:
Totals per Question (Interviews & Focus Groups Combined)

- Expected training at CU?
- Guide structure?
- Ideal Orientation?
- Info the library should provide before arrival?
- Sufficient orientation?
- Valuable info for starting at CU?
- What in the guide was most/least useful?

Number of Comments:
- Positive
- Negative
- Constructive

- Expected training at CU: 2 positive, 13 negative, 5 constructive
- Guide structure: 10 positive, 1 negative, 23 constructive
- Ideal Orientation: 1 positive, 10 negative, 15 constructive
- Info the library should provide before arrival: 3 positive, 2 negative, 15 constructive
- Sufficient orientation: 9 positive, 12 negative, 5 constructive
- Valuable info for starting at CU: 9 positive, 5 negative, 6 constructive
- What in the guide was most/least useful: 11 positive, 10 negative, 20 constructive
Some things that stood out...

Restaurants vs. Libraries
I didn’t know I didn’t know. Then I forgot I didn’t know.

Where’s the Stapler?

We’re all in this together.

Looking for cheese in a maze.
Future Challenges

Initial Revisions / Additions
- Typos, inaccuracies, volunteers, clarifications, reorganizing
- Incorporating Institutional Values / Promoting Socialization
- Supervisor’s guide + Before the new employees arrives

Logistics
- Keeping the Guide up-to-date...how?
- How to make the guide more customizable / flexible
Thank you!

Any Questions?
Sources:


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