Becoming a Young Professional

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My Story: a.k.a. what they don’t teach in library school
2017 Grads by the Numbers
via Library Journal, 10/15/2018

- **85%**
  - full-time
  - 4th consecutive year over 80%

- **6%**
  - unemployment
  - Down 1% from 2016 (3.95% national avg.)

- **78%**
  - satisfaction
  - Increase in all areas except federal jobs

- **$52,152**
  - average salary
  - Up 1% over 2016

For 57%, LIS is their first career. 43% experienced a career change.
What does this mean?

- Overall good news
- But...over half of recent grads are starting careers with little guidance
“Professionalism”
“the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or professional person”

“Professional”
“one that is professional” or “one that engages in a pursuit or activity professionally”

“So, what is professionalism, anyway? Let’s ask Merriam-Webster.”
From the U.S. Dept. of Labor:

“Professionalism does not mean wearing a suit or carrying a briefcase; rather, it means conducting oneself with responsibility, integrity, accountability, and excellence. It means communicating effectively and appropriately and always finding a way to be productive.”
Elements of Professionalism:

- Being on time
- Managing time
- Working well with others
- Personal accountability
- Honesty and integrity
- Neat appearance
- Effective and appropriate communication
Tips from Alison Green, Ask a Manager:

- Pay attention to workplace culture
- Be pleasant and polite even when you don’t like someone
- Take work seriously
- Speak up when there are issues or things aren’t being done on time
- Accept feedback and constructive criticism
- Write succinctly
- Be flexible
- Be reliable
- Be helpful and go above and beyond your job description
- Don’t see management as the enemy
Your turn!

Get to know yourself as a professional

Scenario 1
Justine is a new librarian. She always does what her supervisor asks - no more, no less. How would you classify her attitude towards work?

Scenario 2
Paul is a children’s librarian. Jaclyn, the other children’s librarian, frequently misses deadlines and asks Paul to cover for her. This affects him getting his work done. Should Paul tell the Head of Children’s Services? If so, what should he say?

Scenario 3
Dave’s boss asks him to attend an off-site technology training offered by his consortium. He is reluctant to drive on the highway. How should he handle this? Should he attend the training as requested or decline? If he goes, what steps can he take to help himself?
Take stock of your skills

Sometimes, always, or never?

1. I arrive at work on time. If I’m running late, I notify my supervisor.
2. I rarely miss work. If I know I must miss a shift, I advise my supervisor ahead of time (or call before the start of my shift if there’s an emergency).
3. I work as hard as I can and pay attention to my work.
4. I follow directions and try to problem solve as best I can. If I am unsure of what to do, I ask a colleague or supervisor.
5. I am polite towards my colleagues and patrons.
Professionalism is not...
Now that you have an understanding of professionalism, make a splash!

- Share Ideas
- Show Off Your Work Ethic
- Speak Up
Networking
Yes, it can be scary.

63% of librarians identify as introverts

Start Small.
Think exponentially.
Remember, everyone is/was uncomfortable too.
Find what works for you!
Types of Networking Opportunities:

- Speed networking
- Online - listservs, LinkedIn groups, etc.
- “Traditional” events - happy hours, roundtables, etc.
- Professional organizations
Networking Tips

Shift Your Focus

Informational Interviews

Follow Up!
Still not sure? Volunteer!

- Keep Track of Contacts
- Leverage Social Media
- Stand Out
Mentors:

- Someone whose work you admire
- Someone you feel comfortable leaning on
- Can be industry-specific or not
Tips for Mentees

- Take advantage
- Admire someone’s work? Reach out!
- Be active in professional organizations, but look for non-library events too.
- The more, the merrier!
Moving up the career ladder
Imposter Syndrome
What is it?

“A pervasive feeling of self-doubt, insecurity, or fraudulence despite often overwhelming evidence to the contrary. It strikes smart, successful individuals.”

- Scientific American
When does it happen?

Usually following a major achievement or award.

Affects everyone, but especially women and minorities.

Over half of women feel some self-doubt vs. less than a third of men.
How to Beat it

Dress for Success

Power Pose

Visualize Success
Breathe

Think of Past Successes

Emulate Someone
Don’t Strive for Perfection

Remember Everyone’s Success is Different

Track Your Accomplishments
How to Balance Everything

- Acknowledge burnout is real.
- Slow down.
- Schedule time for yourself.
- Practice saying no.
Questions?

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