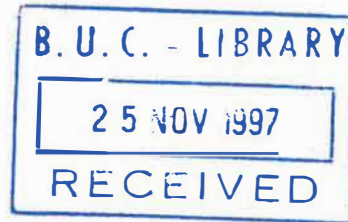


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**STAFFING IN THE LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY  
LIBRARY**

**THE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES**



By

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A Master's Dissertation submitted in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the award  
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## ABSTRACT

This work has surveyed staffing procedures at the Lebanese American University Library LAUL (Beirut campus), comparing these with authoritative concepts of human resource management. The research methods were based on statistical data provided by LAUL and on interviews conducted with library staff from all the staffing levels. The main difficulties encountered by the library were found to be related to space, insufficient staff, poor communication and training, lack of motivation and an excessive number of student assistants. Practical and realistic solutions are recommended for these problems.

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## INTRODUCTION

The library forms one of the basic corner stones of any university and therefore its contribution to the development and progress of the parent institution is unquestionable. An effective library will make information easily available and accessible to the reader, and supports every activity of the university teaching, research and development. This cannot be achieved unless the library is equipped with an effective and harmonious working staff team. It is thus only through proper staffing that readers' needs are satisfied and adequate services can be presented to the library users and to the university as a whole.

### *Aims of the study*

The library of the Lebanese American University (LAU), Beirut campus, like other libraries, faces some problems that could be attributed to an inappropriate staffing. There have been no serious studies so far that have dealt with this issue, or focused on the causes of the difficulties that the library is encountering. This is why the aim of this work is to expose and assess the staffing system or procedure at the library and to identify its defects and weakness based on authoritative concepts of human resource management. Solutions and recommendations will be offered to help the library overcome its problems.

### ***Research methods***

The analytical work in this research is based on statistical data provided by the LAU Library (LAUL) concerning the number of : staff, collection holdings, books, journals, A/V material, items acquired and catalogued per year, questions asked per day, and on interviews conducted with the library staff from all the staffing levels. Interviewing was seen in this case more appropriate than a quantitative survey because the number of people judged to be suitable subjects for the study was relatively small (10 employees and 12 student assistants). Also, it was felt that during interviews issues of which the researcher was unaware would be raised. In fact, although a structured interview schedule focusing on specific topics was prepared and followed, considerable developments arose as the interviews were taken. (The interview schedule is available in appendix I).

### ***Context of higher education in Lebanon***

Higher education in Lebanon is provided by seven other universities besides LAU, four of which are in the capital Beirut. These are: The Lebanese University (LU), The American University of Beirut (AUB), Beirut Arab University (BAU), and the Jesuite University (JU). The remaining three are Balamand University (BU) in the Northern city of Tripoli, while the other two are Notre Dame University (NDU) and Saint Esprit

University (SEU) are in the city of Jounieh, 17km north of Beirut. The languages of instruction in these universities are Arabic and English except in JU and SEU which are Arabic and French.

All of these universities are private except the LU which is owned by the government and offers free studying.

Due to the war, Lebanon came to be divided along sectarian lines, and thus cities and towns were often cut off from each other. Three of these universities, LU, LAU and NDU, opened what were called at that time “temporary branches” in the regions in order to accommodate students who could not cross safely the demarcation line. As the war prolonged, the administration of these universities decided to retain the status quo and expand into “multi-campus” universities.

With respect to degrees, BU and NDU offer only BA and BS, LAU offers BA, BS, MA and MS, while the remaining universities offer BA, BS, MA, MS and PhD.

In this context it is worth mentioning that only the LAU, LU and BU have a BA programme in Library and Information studies.



### *The Lebanese American University : Background*

The Lebanese American University (LAU) is a multi-campus career-oriented liberal arts university. The branching policy was pursued to adapt with the confessional division caused by the war. With its three campuses: first in the Western sector of Beirut, second in the city of Byblos (Jbeil) and third in the southern port city of Sidon (Saida), LAU attempts to serve the educational and social needs of Lebanon and the Middle East. Yet 90% of its students are holders of the Lebanese nationality and the rest are of other nationalities from the Middle East.

Founded in 1924 as the American Junior College, the institution grew into Beirut College for Women (BCW) in 1948-1949, when the programme was expanded to make it a university level institution.

In 1955 the college got an absolute charter by the Board of Regents of the University of the state of New York to grant BA, BS and degrees of Associate in Arts (AA) and Associate in Applied Science (AAS).

In 1970, the Lebanese government officially recognized BCW's BA and BS degrees as equivalent to the national License degree. Having accepted men into some AA programmes, the college changed its name in 1973 to Beirut University College (BUC). The following academic year, five BA/BS programmes covering different majors were

opened to male students, and in October 1975 men were admitted to all majors offered at the college.

Due to the war which broke out in 1975, BUC opened in 1978 the first temporary branch outside the capital Beirut, precisely in Zouq Mousbeh which is a suburb of the city of Jounieh. This branch was soon moved in 1987 to the city of Byblos, and in 1979 a second temporary branch was opened in the city of Sidon.

In 1994, the Board of Regents in New York approved BUC's request to change its name into the Lebanese American University (LAU).

LAU offers studies in the following majors: *Computer Science, Business Management, Political Science* (all at BA and MA level), *Fine Arts, Sociology, Education, Psychology, Biology, Chemistry, Child Study, Women Studies* and *Library and Information Studies* (all at BA level only).

LAU is funded through three channels: the Board of Trustees covers 80% of the income, the contributions of the alumni cover 10% and the students fees cover the remaining 10%.

This study is confined only to the library of the Beirut branch of the university. The size of this library is considered medium, with only 11 employees, three of them are professionals, three non-professionals and five para-professionals. This staff-body is assisted by 40 student assistants who work 1600 hours per month. The total area of the

library is 740m<sup>2</sup>, 175m<sup>2</sup> are allocated for the reading room, 300m<sup>2</sup> for the stacks, 175m<sup>2</sup> for the reference and serials rooms where 3 employees reside, 15m<sup>2</sup> for the circulation and Xeroxing room (run by one member of staff), 25m<sup>2</sup> for the Closed Area where valuable books are housed, and the remaining 50m<sup>2</sup> constitute the working place for the rest of the employees and comprises the 10m<sup>2</sup>-office of the librarian and the 40m<sup>2</sup>-room for six employees. The table below represents the changes with time in the number of students enrolled in the university and number of library holdings and staff members for the period between 1960 and 1995.

Table 1: Evolution of LAUL

	Years			Increase (folds) Since 1960
	1960	1980	1995	
Number of students enrolled in the university	950	2100	2800	2.9
Number of library holdings:				
a) Books	20,000	70,000	100,000	5
b) Serials	70	200	600	8.5
c) Pamphlets, maps and A/V materials	27,100	55,850	100,17	3.7
Number of staff members	6	7	11	1.8

The subjects of the books are divided as follows:

- 20% Computer Science
- 20% Business Management
- 20% Fine Arts
- 20% Social Sciences
- 5% Library and Information Science
- 15% Philosophy, religion, literature and linguistics

The number of journals the library has is:

- 100 Computer Science
- 200 Business and Economics
- 100 Fine Arts
- 100 Social Sciences
- 25 Library and Information Science
- 75 Philosophy, religion, literature and linguistics

The main bulk of the A/V material is dedicated to fine arts.

These figures show that there is almost an equilibrium between the main subjects and majors taught in the university, although some are out dated like the science collection (physics, chemistry and biology), and this could be attributed to the very few students who select such majors (between 5-10 students), and who sometimes refer to other universities when they undertake their research.

Between 500-575 students enter the library daily. Outside clients are very rare. The average number of items borrowed per day is 300 items, and the number of questions asked at the reference desk is 50 questions.

The approximate number of items catalogued per year is 3000; 4000 items acquired per year. This means that each year there is a back-log of 1000 books for cataloguing.

In terms of languages, the library's primary collection is in English with small collections in Arabic and a few items in other European languages. The library contains two special collections: The Documentation Centre of the Institute for the Women Studies in the Arab World, and the Children's Library. The former contains books and serials in women's studies as well as clippings files. The children's library serves the LAU students majoring in *Education* and *Child Study*, and also acts a public library for children.

While the library suffered a hit in 1983, there was only minor damage to the building and the collection. The main problem during the war was budget freezing. There was therefore a very careful attempt to work with faculty to assure that the book budget was allocated as wisely as possible. Department chairs were asked to give their approval to books recommended by the library, while the librarian used to stay abreast and advise the faculty of available titles. This in fact created problems according to the librarian because the teachers rarely selected books although they were provided with book reviews, and

thus few books were ordered which reflected badly on the currency of the collection. Gifts have unfortunately not been very important component in the library's collection building.

The library offers the classical readers' services, beside helping students in writing bibliographical citations.

The LAU Library (LAUL) did not evolve and grow in parallel with its parent institution, and the main difficulties it is facing nowadays are problems in human resource management relating to recruitment. There is a lack of job analysis and job specification as well as lack of motivation among employees. There is poor communication and training, and a small number of staff members and an excess of student assistants (40 in number) who constitute a burden on the budget of the library without offering the expected work in return.

This study aims to uncover the difficulties encountered by the library and consequently to suggest means of overcoming them. Hence it could be used by the library to develop a better allocation of staff resources.

## CHAPTER ONE

### *1. STAFFING IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES*

#### *AND THE LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY*

##### *(LAUL)*

In order to maintain an effective work force, an organisation must have accurate information regarding the quantity and quality of its human resources, that is the staff. The quality of the staff is determined by the duties and the responsibilities of their job, while the quantity of the staff is determined by the amount and type of work to be performed and by the efficiency with which the work is performed.

Staffing as part of human resource management focuses on the human aspects and getting the best out of human beings (1). Staffing provides an organisation with manpower resources for its various activities (2). It also studies present and future manpower needs and ways of satisfying them.

Staffing includes all methods of matching skills available with the tasks to be performed, through manpower planning, job description, recruitment and selection as well as motivation, training and appraisal. What holds all these components together and keeps staffing from becoming a synonym for employment is the concept of human resource planning.

In line with other organisations, universities libraries need an effective and capable staffing policy in order to encounter the academic responsibilities and to contribute in the intellectual and scientific development of the society. .

A university library is “a library established, maintained and administered by a university to meet the academic staff”(3). By definition, a library cannot exist without documents or some form of recorded material; neither can it function without staff (4).

Statistical records are an essential source of information for human resources in any university library, and they should be maintained in relation to personnel work. These will include statistics on:

Number of staff

Staff turnover rates

Vacancy levels

Promotion rates

Effective recruitment sources

Problems encountered in recruiting certain types of staff

Market conditions, rates of pay and conditions of work (5).

Effective staffing in university libraries is an important component of effective human resource management which leads to a balance between the recruitment needs and the avoidance of long delays in getting projects done. A successful forward planning should not ignore the needs of existing staff, like staff training and development which are also



integral parts of human resource planning, representing as they do a further investment in the human resources of the organisation.

Human resource management in university libraries must therefore be regarded as an ongoing and continuing process which needs regular updating, adaptation and evaluation.

### ***1.1 Levels of staffing***

The ratio of professional to non-professional staff in libraries has varied through the years. But the ratio of one-third professional and two-third non-professional staff is now generally advocated in the library literature (6). As the ratio shifts, many of the more routine responsibilities that were formerly performed by professionals were shifted downward to non-professionals.

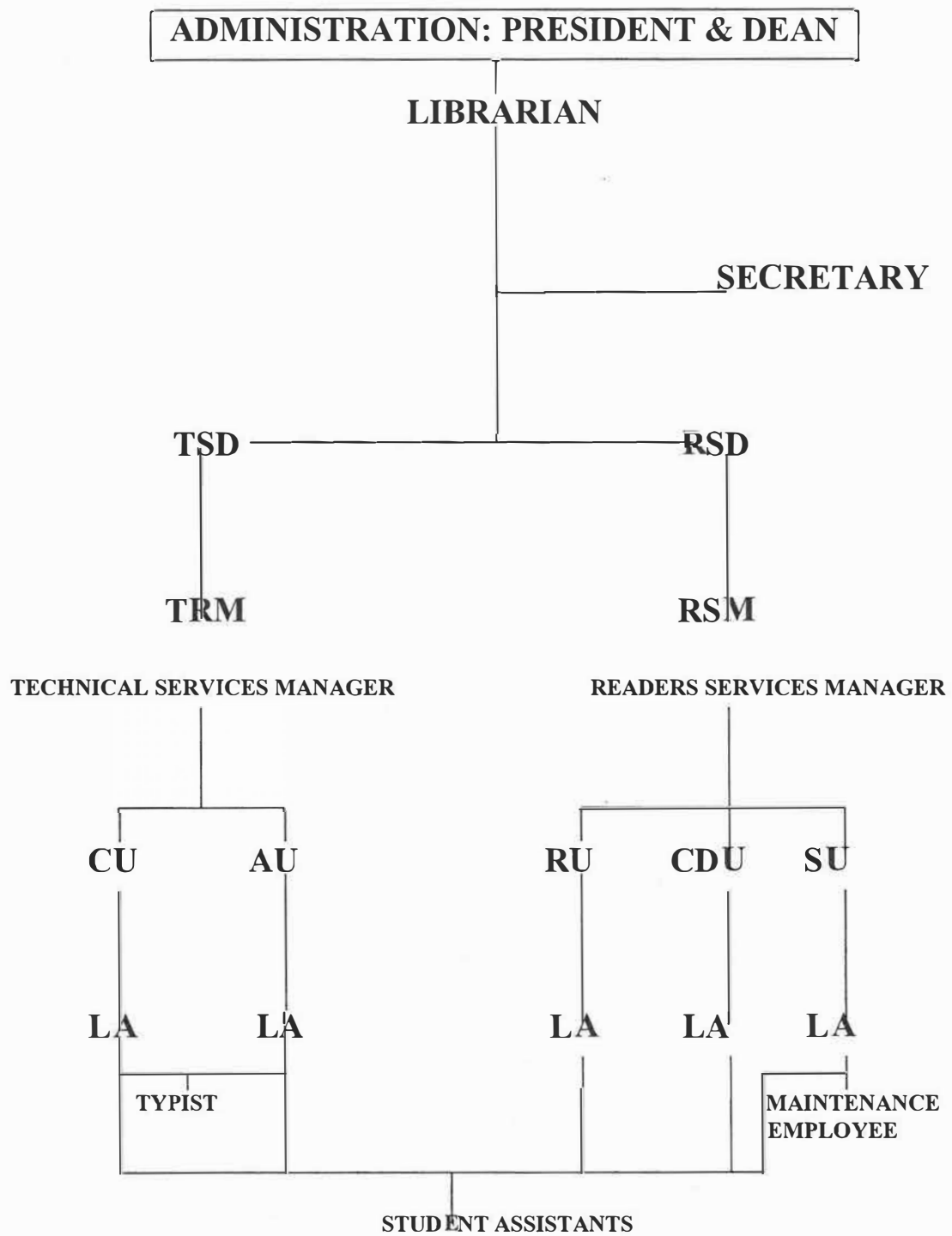
Professionals according to Myers (7) include *Librarians* and *Specialists*. The *Librarian* carries with it the connotation of 'professional' in the sense that professional tasks are those which require a special background and education on the basis of which library needs are identified, problems are analysed, goals are set, and original and creative solutions are formulated for them. A librarian should also integrate theory into practice, and plan, organise, communicate, and administer successful programmes of service to users of the library's materials and services. In defining services to users, the professional person recognizes potential users as well as current ones, and designs services which will reach all who could benefit from them.

With respect to *Specialists*, as the library grows in size and complexity, the use of non-library work increases. This includes the maintenance and clerical staff, specialist personnel in budget, finance, automation, and public relations, besides binding/restoration specialists, curators of special collections and library publicists.

As for non-professionals, there is a wide variety of names which have been used for them including sub-professional, paraprofessional, library assistant, library/media technical assistant, clerk, library aid, library associate, intern and trainee. The job of the non-professional staff focuses mainly on providing routine reference services, readers' advice and outreach services, assisting in a children's library, or administering small branch agencies, book mobiles, or specialised subject departments. Here a broad background of librarianship is not considered necessary.

### ***1.2 Levels of staffing and staffing structure at the LAU Library***

There are eleven staff members at the LAU Library (LAUL), three of them are professionals, five are para-professionals, and three non-professionals. This ratio of professionals to non-professionals is less than one third. The organisational structure is as follows: (See chart 1)



**CHART 1: Organisational structure of LAU Library**

### The librarian:

She is the Head of the library and responsible directly to the Dean of the university. She is a professional member of staff and responsible for planning, interacting with other libraries, managing business work such as signing invoices or reviewing offers, as well as undertaking a range of administrative and management tasks like evaluating the employees (including checking their time sheets, approving their vacations and annual leaves) and finally selecting new applicants.

The librarian spends most of her time meeting with her peers or with the Dean and the President of the university. She also writes monthly reports on the general situation and problems in the library and submits them to the Dean.

Under the librarian there are three posts: the secretary and two department managers. One of these managers is called the Technical Services Manager (TSM), and the other is the Readers Services Manager and they are in charge of the *Technical Services Department* (TSD) and the *Readers' Services Department* (RSD) respectively.

### The Secretary:

She is directly responsible to the librarian and has no subordinates. Being non-professional, her job is to answer telephone calls, take appointments for the librarian and

type the latter's reports, letters and messages. The secretary is required to file the library's records and business documents (like invoices, offers, checks, etc.) in a systematic manner. She falls exclusively under the authority of the librarian.

#### The Technical Services and the Readers' Services Managers:

Both are professionals and have more crucial responsibilities than the secretary, and even more privileges and fringe benefits. They should be university graduates in library and information science, while the secretary could be a graduate of any vocational institution.

The job of each of them is to receive broad overall strategies and policies from the librarian and translate them into specific action programmes to be implemented by their subordinates. Among their jobs, also, is reporting to the librarian about the performance of their subordinates and whether any problem or discrepancy exists. They act as a buffer between the librarian and their subordinates.

The TSM and the RSM spend most of their time between monitoring their employees and using high-level communication skills in talking on the telephone and attending meetings with the librarian. They have an in-depth knowledge of their department and its relationships with other departments in order to perform the necessary co-ordination function which is in fact a part of their role. They are directly responsible to the librarian.

### Library Assistants:

At LAU Library there are five library assistants running the following units: Cataloguing Unit (CU), Acquisition Unit (AU), Reference Unit (RU), Circulation Desk Unit (CDU) and Serials Unit (SU). The assistants of CU and AU are directly responsible to the manager of the TSD, while those of RU, CDU and SU are subordinated to the manager of RSD. Theoretically these library assistants are par-professional staff, and their qualifications do not require a university degree, rather a vocational certificate in Library science is sufficient.

The library assistants are responsible for the day-to-day administration of resources in order to meet short term objectives. They spend little time with the librarian or their managers, and deal mainly with their subordinates and the readers.

On the whole, their work is hectic and boring. They convey the daily complaints of the students to their managers especially in the issues of missing or mutilated items.

The typist and the maintenance employee:

The typist is responsible to both the CU and AU. She types the automated and non-automated materials concerning cataloguing and acquisition. The job of the maintenance employee is to do binding for both serials and books. He is responsible to the SU.

The typist and the maintenance employee are non-professional staff and they do not require university degree.

Student assistants:

Besides the regular staff, LAU library employs 40 student assistants each semester, distributed among all the departments of the library ( Table 2).

Department	No. of student assistants	No. of hours per student/week	Total number per week	Total No. per month
Circulation	30	10	300	1200
Cataloguing	2	10	20	80
Serials	4	10	40	160
Reference	2	10	20	80
Acquisition	2	10	20	80
Total	40		450	1600

Table 2: Work load and salaries of student assistants at LAU Library

The work load of a student assistant is 40 hours per month, while that of a regular library staff is 160 per month. In other words, every 4 student assistants should replace a regular library employee. Consequently, the work performed by all the 40 student assistants should be equivalent to that of ten library employees.

Although this policy of student employment seems at first glance good and economical, it has proved actually to be unsuccessful and unproductive. According to the staff interviewed, student assistants are in most of the cases careless, distrustful and unreliable and should be always supervised carefully by a regular staff member. The time and effort



spent on supervision are not worth the work done by the student assistants, and when one of them is dismissed for poor performance, additional time and effort should be spent in training the new assistants.

A survey conducted in summer 1995 on the evaluation of student assistants showed that their efficiency in the library work is only 50% that of a regular staff member, consequently the 40 student assistants who are supposed to replace ten regular library employees, are replacing actually only 5. The remuneration rate for a student assistant is 12000 Lebanese Pound (LP) per hour, while that of a regular staff member is only LP 10000 (One Sterling Pound is equivalent to 2500 LP), so LP 19.2 millions per month go for student assistants while the salary of the 5 regular staff members amounts only to LP 8 millions.

It is evident that the remuneration rate of student assistants is not commensurate either with their experience or with their productivity. As has been demonstrated, the employment of 40 student assistants is not cost-effective, and the recruitment of such a big number of staff is unjustified (8). Student assistants constitute thus a financial burden on the LAU library and a crucial staff problem that has to be solved.

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## CHAPTER TWO

### *2. RECRUITMENT*

Recruitment is the attempt to attract compatible individuals to a firm as potential employees. Effective recruiting can make all the difference between a poor and a high quality service. It has been argued that recruitment is the most vital aspect of staff management in both financial and human terms. A mistake or a mismatch between a person and a job does not lead only to poor performance and output, but also to a stressful working environment resulting in absences, unsatisfactory behaviour and conflicts with colleagues(1).

So it is necessary while recruiting to ensure that the tasks and responsibilities of a post are compatible with the person appointed. The aim, therefore, is not merely to fill vacancies, but to place people in posts where they are capable of implementing their responsibilities and those of the organisation as a whole.

As in other organisations, the recruitment of suitable staff is the first task a library director has to perform. Poor recruitment procedures will affect the efficiency of the library or information service, while selecting the wrong staff will increase turnover and leads to low morale and low productivity, both of which affect the quality of the service to the public(2).

A library staffed by reliable, honest, conscientious, intelligent, skilled, tactful and attractive staff, ought to run better than another staffed by unreliable, dishonest, lazy, stupid, unskilled and tactless employees. The difficulty of course lies in finding the paragons (3).

Recruitment in libraries varies from country to country, from one type of post to another, and from one period to the next. The following lines will tackle each aspect of recruitment in general and how it applies to LAU Library (LAUL).

### ***2.1 Recruitment policy at LAUL***

The recruitment procedure at LAUL was revealed during the interview with the librarian that whenever a new staff member is to be hired at LAUL, she [the librarian] has to negotiate with the administration about the financial coverage. If the results are negative, the post remains vacant till further notice, if positive, steps will be taken to proceed in the recruitment process.

The librarian acknowledged that the final decision of the administration is affected to a certain extent by her judgments and justifications she presents. Her persuasive and sound convictions can dissuade the administration from rejecting any hiring proposal.

Having obtained the consent of the administration, the librarian carries out the recruitment procedure.

## ***2.2 Job analysis***

A vacancy is an occasion for analysing what the post holder did, and how it fits in with the organisation's purposes which may be taking new directions, or adapting to new technologies.(4) So, job analysis should precede advertising for the particular job that has fallen vacant.

To Line and Kinnell, job analysis "is a key component in organization design, and the methods of undertaking this can be controversial; in libraries, job analysis may be a preliminary to job evaluation and may be carried out by a central work evaluation unit."(5)

Corbett (6) has a broader view concerning job analysis. According to him : "where a job is minutely observed by personal observation, and the employee and his immediate supervisor interviewed, and then the job checked with a standard checklist and the circumstances under which it is performed are noted, this is known as 'job analysis'"

To Bryson (7), job analysis is the process of studying and collecting information relating to the operations and responsibilities of a specific job. It is fundamental to the preparation of the job specification and job description.

Collecting information comes through several channels which are: observation, interviewing, questionnaire, filming activities, daily diaries or time sheets, and written descriptions (8).

Observation is a useful method for the collection of information if the job is simple and repetitive, on the other hand, the interview reveals some additional information which were not apparent during the observation and allows verbal verification of information already obtained from observing job practices.

Filling questionnaires and writing descriptions rely upon the ability of the job holder to provide an organised and complete report of the job. These skills are not always mastered at lower levels in the organisation's hierarchy where report writing and analytical skills are not required. In such cases, daily diaries or time sheets provide a more structured approach to analysing tasks (9).

Job analysis is considered a helpful aid to staff structuring and allocation of work, and in some special libraries job analysis is often used as a preliminary to job evaluation which may be defined as the process of analysing and assessing the relative contents of jobs,

placing them in an acceptable rank order, which can be used as the basis for a pay structure.(10)

There are both qualitative and quantitative approaches in job analysis.

The quantitative approach refers to factors such as the size of the work group, and the number of times a task is performed per hour, day or week.(11). Scores are given to each job component, depending on its level of difficulty. When the scores are totalled for all the tasks which make up the job, an indication is available of whether the job needs to be carried out by professional staff or by non-professionals(12).

The qualitative approach refers to working conditions and personnel requirements(13). It is more usual in library and information work, and involves scrutinising jobs for levels of difficulty, without actually assigning scores(14).

### ***2.2.1 Job analysis at LAUL***

The librarian insisted in the interview that there is no job analysis to any post at LAUL to which she can refer in filling a vacant position. According to her, the size of the library with such few number of posts does not urge the administration and the librarian to produce a 'job analysis'. Another reason according to the librarian is that posts at LAUL are not always stable, some may be cancelled, others may be created. All these changes

depend on the security conditions and the academic environment in Lebanon. She gave the example of the Arabic cataloguer post which was abolished and the person in charge of this post took a new established job in the library which was known as 'Newspapers Archives', where clippings of newspapers on a certain 'hot' issue were collected. After two years, the Newspapers Archives post was ended and the employee in charge was shifted to the Readers' Services Department which was vacant at that time.

The librarian sees that such an instability in the posts does not instigate and encourage senior management to gather information, make systematic study and prepare a statement of the personal qualities needed for a job which might be deleted after a period.

The librarian also considers that the inflation in the Lebanese economy made it impossible to determine any rate of pay, which is an important item in job analysis. It is worth mentioning that in 1991 one Sterling Pound (SP) was equivalent to approximately 2500 Lebanese Pound (LP), while in 1992 one SP was equivalent to 3400LP, and in 1994 one SP to 2600LP.

### ***2.3 Job description***

Preparation of a job description is the first task in the appointment procedure. A Job description is usually a written statement of the responsibilities, approaches, conditions and other relevant factors built into a job. Corbett defines a job description as "the statement of purpose of a particular job, its scope and responsibilities, together with



details of to whom the post holder is responsible. Job descriptions are generally written for a group of posts with the same responsibilities, eg. for branch librarians in a system, rather than for each individual branch librarian” (15). On the other hand, Jones and Jordan (16) view the job description :“as a statement of the objectives, main tasks, supervisory duties and place in the staff structure which the job holder is expected to take on board. It should be the outcome of careful job analysis rather than an automatic retention of what the previous holder did.” For Bryson also a job description is (17) :“the first and immediate product of the job analysis. It is a factual statement of the duties and responsibilities of a specific job”. To Line and Kinnell “ the job description comprises the next stage in recruitment of staff; in a period of retrenchment, this may mean restructuring and reallocating jobs rather than appointing new staff.(18)

Job description can be used for a number of purposes; for planning the overall establishment; for reviewing the organisational structure, including transfer of holders of posts made redundant to other positions, for job evaluation; to supply employees and applicants for the advertised vacancy with a list of their responsibilities; to send out to applicant who reply to advertised vacancies, and for staff appraisal.

Job description forms the basis for human resource planning, recruitment and position management. It can be used to provide intending applicants and new appointees with details of the position.

Job descriptions need to be updated continuously if they are to be effective, otherwise they become irrelevant and are ignored. They need also to leave some scope for initiative and innovation on the part of the jobholder.

Since there is no standard form for their development, job description will vary in content and arrangement from one organisation to another. Job descriptions in libraries usually provide the following information:

- Job identification: provides information such as job title, alternative title, department and division.
- Job summary: includes a short definition of the job itself.
- Duties performed: it tells what is to be done and how, and the purpose behind each duty.
- Achievable results: measure performance by providing standards which describe the minimal acceptable employee achievement in each duty.
- Reporting-supervising functions: identifies the immediate superior and subordinate positions and degree of supervision received and given.
- Combination tasks/relationship to other jobs; identifies the vertical and horizontal relationships of workflow and procedures, and the positions within the organisation with which co-ordination is required.
- Machines, tools and materials: lists and defines each major type of technology, and equipment used.

- Working conditions: which are checklists describing some elements of the physical environment often used to indicate working conditions using such as hot, cold, dry, dusty, noisy etc...(19)

Jones and Jordan (20) present another list of contents:

- Statement and purpose, objectives of the job.
- Main tasks and duties.
- Place of the post in the library's staffing structure.
- Contacts outside the library.
- Salary scales and working conditions.

### ***2.3.1 Job description at LAUL***

In the interview, the librarian reported the following concerning a job description at LAUL: "Every post has a job description, one copy of which is kept in the library and another in the personnel office. The job description at LAUL enlists the functions, responsibilities and qualifications of the incumbent. Job description at LAUL is entailed by a listing known as 'Primary Responsibilities' (PR) (See appendix II). It gives the title of the staff, identifies the person to whom the post holder is responsible, lists the supervisory duties, sets the scope of the job and the responsibilities and main tasks of the employee".

The PR does not however include the conditions and factors built into the job such as measures of performance or standards which describe the minimal acceptable employee achievement. The PR misses also the job summary which would include a short definition of the job itself.

The librarian added that she may need sometimes to defend and to justify the items of the job description in front of the personnel office. She stated also : “job description at LAUL is updated every five years because sometimes posts are cancelled or merged with other ones or new ones are established”.

#### ***2.4 Job specification***

The contents and arrangements of a job specification, like that of job description vary from one organisation to another.

The difference between job specification and job description is that job specification describes the desired attributes of the person doing the job, whereas job description describes the job itself (21).

Job specification can include the following aspects:

- Information inputs to the position, that is including verbal or auditory interpretation and environmental awareness, as well as interpretations of perceptions.

- Mental processes: decision-making, information processing, use of job-related knowledge.
- Work output: manual or control activities, physical coordination required, skills and technical abilities, use of equipment and technology.
- Relationship with other persons.
- Job context.
- Other job characteristics, like activities that demand attention, caution and vigilance.

The job specification should form the base upon which applications are initially screened. It should be used as a comparison between the qualifications of the candidates and the basic qualifications of the job (22).

#### ***2.4.1 Job specification at LAUL***

During the interview, the librarian affirmed that there is no job specification at LAUL. When she was asked about the reason, she responded that many elements of the job specification are included in the rationale of the proposals for a new post, and thus there is no need to produce a listing of a job specification.

## ***2.5 Job advertisement***

Job advertisement should include information relating to the organisation, job specifications, details of the name of the library, the name of a contact person and telephone number for further details, closing date, person or place to whom applications should be sent and application details required.

The advertisement layout, design and copy should reflect an accurate image of the library. It should reflect also the organisation's size, whether the organisation is conservative or progressive, centralized or decentralized, dynamic or static (23).

Advertisements may be placed in the local or national press, trade journals or professional media. The choice of media will depend upon the level of the position to be advertised.

### ***2.5.1 Job advertisement at LAUL***

When the librarian was asked about job advertisement at LAU, she reported the followings: "Advertising will not attract significant number of applications because people majoring in Library and Information Science are relatively few, since only three universities in Lebanon have a BA programme in this major". When the librarian was asked how people know about a vacancy at LAUL she gave the following answer: "They can know either through headmasters or through the word of the mouth because the

community is small.” She added that because the market is small, applicants drop by continuously to check whether a vacant position is available in the library. They fill in an application and deposit it in the personnel office. When there is a need to fill a vacant post, the librarian screens the applications and pools the ones which are judged appropriate, and asks the personnel office to call upon the applicants for the interview.

### ***2.6 Staff selection***

According to Jordan and Jones(24) selection of the staff passes through the following stages:

- Advertising
- Interviewing
- Tests

Filley (25) proposes a three step method for selection. In the first, a standard for the job is set based on the job description and the job analysis. The second refers to the past experience of the applicants through tests. However, with the absence of traditional testing, the interview becomes the most common selection device in addition to some recommendation and reference. The third step involves use an appropriate selection ratio between the number of the applicants and the number of positions that need to be filled.

Corbett (26) emphasizes highly on the interview as a means of staff selection. He writes: "In spite of the well-known limitations of the interview as a means of selecting future employees, it is still more or less universally adopted for filling professional posts in libraries, and no other method has been satisfactorily proved to be superior for appointments of this nature. Some other alternatives are intelligence test, aptitude test, proficiency tests, personality tests and references."

Casteleyn (27) has a similar view on staff selection. She gives the priority to the interview, then comes ability, aptitude and psychological testing. She adds a new step rarely practised, which is graphology. According to her : "Handwriting may make a statement about a person's frame of mind at the time of writing, [but] it is doubtful whether it can be used to make predictions about future success or capabilities".

After these steps, comes the final selection. There are views and opinions concerning who is going to choose the future employees among the applicants. Among these views is that of Rogers and Weber which states that : "university and college libraries control the final selection of all personnel. The burden of professional recruitment is likely to fall entirely on the library with only occasional assistance from the personnel office. The latter, however, will refer clerical and secretarial personnel to the library. In the best university and college personnel offices, there will be preliminary screening of applicants, some testing of clerical skills, and even obtaining of health clearance. If this



practice does not prevail, the library will be advised to establish its own programme of testing”(28). In a library, a variety of tests can be used. A typist might be given a typing test, and a cataloguer or reference librarian might be asked to produce examples of past work. Only if enough people are available can any test, written or performance, be statistically validated. Unless there is someone sophisticated in the use of tests in the library, outside consultative help should be sought.

The immediate supervisor and the personnel administrator may meet to discuss and decide on the finalist to whom an offer of appointment will be made. In most institutions, the policy is to permit the supervisor of the unit that has the vacancy to make the final decision as to who is to be hired.

Arriving at the final decision may be a very complex process, that may come after long discussions by the search committee and other concurrent discussions by members of the department in which the position exists, or by a faculty executive committee (if there is a library faculty governance structure), by institutional units or offices, such as the personnel office or office of academic affairs, or by the immediate supervisor.

Jordan and Jones have the following comment concerning this issue: “Assuming the personnel specifications effectively list the attributes required of a person for a particular post then the task of any selector is to discover to what extent these attributes are present”(29).

Two basic approaches maybe followed to validate the decision. “One is to look at current employees, find one (or more) job-related factors common to their performance, designate it as a potential predictor, and then determine if it is actually related to job performance. This approach is called *concurrent validity*. A second possibility is to use a screening test in the hiring process, see how well the hired applicants do, and correlate the test scores with their respective performance. This approach is called *predictive validity* (30). Education and job experience can be valid screening criteria as well (31).

### ***2.6.1 Staff selection at LAUL***

In the interview, the librarian revealed that at LAU no committees or board of managers are involved in selecting an employee. Staff selection at LAUL is shared by the librarian, the Dean and the personnel office. The librarian’s opinion weighs 50% of the final decision, while the Dean and the personnel office contributes each 25%.

The librarian pinpointed also in the interview the steps followed in the staff selection at LAUL. Staff selection (always according to the librarian) starts with an interview of the candidate with the librarian, the Dean and the personnel office. During the interview session, the librarian gives the applicant a list of the Primary Responsibilities and all information concerning the vacant post. She also informs the candidate about the salary and the fringe benefits acquired during employment.

The outcome and notes of the three interviews are compared in order to take a common stand towards the applicants. If the decision is positive it is conveyed together with the application to the personnel office who will undertake the necessary arrangements with the chosen nominee to start working.

Concerning tests, the librarian stated that they are not practised at LAUL in the selection process. When she was asked about the reason, she said that the three month period of probation is sufficient to disclose the performance of the applicant. In addition, most of the library work, except for cataloguing and typing, cannot be tested especially with the advent of automation which makes the tasks easier and simpler.

### ***2.7 Means of ending employment***

Termination of employment in any organisation is of three types: *voluntary*, *legal* and *disciplinary*.

*Voluntary* could be either by the employee such as resignation or by the management like redundancy.

Resignation: if a member of staff resigns, he/she should submit a letter of resignation giving the line manager the correct period of notice according to the contract. Some

people object to give their reasons for quitting the job. Although these explanations are not strictly necessary, yet they may be important to the organisation because they can bring to the attention of the senior management the causative factors behind these resignations.

### Resignation at LAUL

The librarian stated in the interview that resignation at LAUL starts with a letter written by the employee who wants to resign. This letter should reach the librarian at least one month before the leaving date, and it is up to the employee to reveal the reasons behind the resignation. The librarian has the full authority to accept or refuse this resignation. In case of acceptance, the employee will be given his/her due indemnity that varies according to the working years, plus 'a farewell party'. In case of rejection, the employee has to continue working, otherwise punitive measures would be taken against him/her. The librarian revealed that the rejection of resignations at LAUL, is however, a rare event. She added also that during her last ten years of services she witnessed two cases of resignation in the library. The first is the case of a typist who left the work because she got married, the second is the case of the circulation librarian who left because she found a better paid job in a different field.

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This is explained by the librarian as a sign of satisfaction and content. She missed the other plausible explanation for the rare resignation which could be attributed to the inability to find another better job

Redundancy: also known as ‘downsizing’ ‘or letting people go’ (32). It occurs when employees are released from employment because the organisation is no longer in need of their services. Redundancies may be temporary or permanent. They are likely to arise as a result of the introduction of new technologies while opportunities for training or reskilling are few (33).

Proper human resources planning may help in reducing the negative effects of redundancies by retraining, redeployment, restrictions on further recruitment and calls for early retirement.

#### Redundancy at LAUL

According to the librarian redundancy has never been applied at LAUL even during the critical days of the war, and this could be attributed to the continuous shortage of library staff.

*Legal termination* appears in the form of retirement. The policy of the institution regarding retirement should be spelt out as clearly as possible to employees at the time of their appointment\_\_

The organisation may have a compulsory retirement age (usually 65) or a settled agreement with the employees who wish to retire earlier. A fixed retirement age may

deprive the organisation from many elements who are still very productive and capable, and may leave others who are less efficient and less active (34).

### Retirement at LAUL

In the interview, the librarian reported the following: “the retirement age at LAUL is 65. Upon retirement, the employee receives indemnity, and a farewell party is organised for him/her during which the librarian praises in front of all the university employees the good performance of the resigned person during the working years, and then she offers him/her a souvenir from the university in appreciation for the services in the library. If the library is still in need of that employee, it can hire him/her on a part time basis for three more years which means that according to the Lebanese Labour Law (Qanun al-Amal al-Lubnani) he/she would not profit from the fringe benefits offered to the full timers including medical insurance and indemnity.

The librarian added that throughout the history of the LAUL, most of the retired employees who were mainly women, preferred to leave the library after retirement, to spend their time with their families or to engage in writing books or in a new business like opening book shops or printing press if they can afford it financially.

*Disciplinary termination* includes dismissal. This is probably the most stressful and distasteful method of separation because the employee is unsatisfactory in terms of

behaviour, performance or attitude(35). There is another opinion on dismissal by Dr. Maurice Tauber, the distinguished American surveyor who does not feel resentful towards this step as shown in the following statement : “in order to get a job done one must be forthright in making a decision about a person who fails to meet expectations as personality problems, absenteeism or deterioration in a position which he/she is no longer effective. These people are being moved and I do not think that this is wrong” (36).

The organisation has obligations towards its employees; it is responsible for developing the staff members according to its own goals and values and for providing an opportunity to succeed for every one of them. This includes the provision of adequate communication, consultation, training and supervision. It should also attempt to improve or correct the offending aspects of the employee and it is only when these measures prove inefficient that the organisation should resort to dismissal.

Employers should be careful to ensure that before any staff member is dismissed, his/her case has been considered fairly and objectively.

Finally after exposing the means of ending employment it is worth mentioning that upon dismissal an ‘exit interview’ is held with the employee. At this point when the bond between the employee and the organisation is broken, the employee may at last feel free to discuss matters which may have either been of concern to him/her or sources of grievance or anxiety. The highlighting of the negative aspects of the organisation should

help also the senior management to be more effective and to learn from the previous shortcomings.

### Dismissal at LAUL

According to the librarian dismissal is very rare at LAUL. But in case it happened, it was implemented after giving the employee three warnings. When the employee did not comply, dismissal was issued. In cases of dismissals, indemnity is also given, but of course without a farewell party. The librarian said that throughout her career at LAUL, she resorted to dismissal only after the probation period, but not as a punitive measure for a working member of staff.

### ***2.8 Turnover***

Turnover is the rate at which workers move into and out of employment and is usually expressed as the number of accessions and separations during a fixed period.

Turnover has positive and negative effects on libraries. On the positive side it will reduce the library's average labour costs as new staff are usually appointed at the first level of the appropriate salary scale. Turnover helps also in the 'injection of new blood' into an organisation that is expected to improve its efficiency, by introducing new ideas and technologies.



Staff turnover has also its disadvantage: it is expensive in terms of finance, time and staff morale. The economic cost is manifested in severance pay for advertising, recruiting and training new personnel.

Too slow a turnover rate will result in a staid organisation, while a high turnover rate is usually unsettling for the remaining employees because it is an indication that there is a problem in the organisation.

The library must try to lower the turnover rate of the high performers and increase the turnover rate of the low performance in order to obtain a greater return on investment. Positions in which the tasks are simple to learn like shelving can attract a higher turnover rate than those where a knowledge of the organisation or stock is needed, such as subject specialists or reference librarians.

### ***2.8.1 Turnover at LAUL***

According to the librarian in the interview, turnover at LAUL varied from one department to another. The posts of the Library Assistant at the circulation desk, the secretaries, typists and the maintenance employees had the highest turnover rate, followed by the librarian's post itself. The remaining posts were almost stable especially the posts of the Library Assistant in the acquisition and cataloguing departments.

The librarian attributed this trend of turnover to the limited size of the market in Lebanon for jobs like acquisition and cataloguing, while secretaries and typists could find a job in any other firm or organisation. The turnover for the librarian's post is relatively high because the previous librarians had the financial means to travel abroad and escape from the war in Lebanon. Through their personal contacts with other libraries abroad, they were able to establish themselves in other countries.

Another reason for turnover in such posts was the fact that most of them were held by women who either got married or pregnant, and consequently could not compromise between their work obligations and family commitments.

As for the post of maintenance employee, it has a low pay, and staff do not last in it and take it as a transitory job awaiting for a better position.

The data on turnover according to the librarian are used as a criterion that helps in uncovering a hidden defect or problem in a post.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the student assistants at LAUL form the big bulk of the staff turnover in the library, whereby many new student assistants are recruited each semester to replace the ones who have graduated. Such turnover rate does not give consequently any significant indication to the management and costs the library a lot in terms of time, effort and training.

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## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. *STAFF APPRAISAL*

“Staff appraisal, like the hydrogen bomb, was an American invention that emerged at the time of the second World War” (1). Staff appraisal is different from job evaluation, and these two managerial terms should not be used as synonyms. Staff appraisal is the reviewing of individual’s performance and progress in a job and the assessment of his/her potential for future promotion; it is a systematic method of obtaining, analysing and recording information about a person. Job evaluation, on the other hand, is a systematic rating of job content using such factors as skill, personality and experience; it is a technique for establishing the relative worth of jobs in a hierarchy.

At LAUL also staff appraisal is different from job evaluation as revealed by the librarian in the interview. The first is used for promotion and assessment and is called ‘evaluation of non-academic personnel’ (see appendix III), while the second represents the qualifications needed for the post.

### *3.1 Objectives of staff appraisal*

Staff appraisal has become much more common in libraries just as in other organisation, as part of the need to improve the performance of services, to predict what an individual will be capable of doing in the future and to allocate and distribute rewards fairly (2).

The objectives of appraisal are improving appraisee performance, enhancing career development, developing promotion potential, identifying organisational barriers in the way of appraisees' development, identifying training and development needs and improving the organisational performance (3). Most good appraisal schemes have a common core in that they evaluate staff performance, set goals and objectives, examine training needs and consider the achieved objectives (4). A performance appraisal system cannot work effectively without a sense of direction, and failure to take into consideration long-term organisational objectives, will ultimately lead to problems (5).

#### *3.1.1 Objectives of Staff appraisal at LAUL*

The librarian of LAUL stated in the interview that staff appraisal in her library is a continuous process to remedy any weaknesses; it is done all through the year as and soon as defects or needs arise. She added that promotion and rewards are also among the aims of staff appraisal at LAUL, and that in the light of such appraisal the member of the staff is either rewarded (through money or fringe benefits) or kept static or penalized. The interviewed staff members were skeptic about the aforementioned aims of appraisal.

Eight out of ten reported that they have not been promoted or rewarded for many years although the librarian has never complained about their work and they were almost sure that she has given them a good recommendation. They put the blame on the administration for not implementing the librarian's recommendations.

### *3.2 Forms of staff appraisal*

#### *3.2.1 Probation*

One of the earliest and most essential forms of staff appraisal is the assessment of a new staff member during the period of probation. According to Casteleyn, this period is usually six months (6), while Corbett sets between three and six months and in some cases even longer to safeguard against appointments which may turn out to be unsatisfactory(7). Many organisations have a provision that all new staff are subject to probation. If, at the end of a probation period the performance of the staff member proves to be satisfactory, he/she will be appointed, if not he/she will be dismissed.

The purpose of probation, therefore, is to decide whether a new member of staff is eligible to retain the job or has failed to meet its requirements.

Training forms an important part of the probation period. Good training will enable the new staff member to be introduced to and become familiar with the different techniques

used and consequently to perform well and to avoid inadequacy and dissatisfaction, such that the results of the assessment will be positive.

Probation may be dispensed with when the person appointed is coming from another organisation with transferable superannuation benefits (8).

#### *3.2.1.1 Probation at LAUL*

According to the interview with the librarian and the staff, every new member of staff at LAUL, whether they are experienced or not, should go through a probation period of three months. The librarian continued that after the expiry of this period she assesses the performance, attitude and attendance of the concerned employee. If the results are positive, she asks the personnel office to prepare a final contract for this new staff. If the performance of that employee was unsatisfactory, he/she will not be appointed as a permanent staff in the library and arrangement will be made to terminate his/her temporary employment.

The librarian denied also in the interview the existence of training sessions following the probation period because according to the policy of the university, a three month probation period is enough to know whether the new employee is efficient, active and reliable or not. So if this employee fails after that period, then he/she is judged ineligible to work at LAU even after training sessions.



The librarian was asked then whether she has resorted to dismissal after the probation period, and her answer was a firm 'yes'. She reported that through her career at LAUL she has dismissed two applicants out of eight who she judged unqualified for the work.

### *3.2.2 Assessment during work*

Another form of appraisal occurs during the working period, where the heads of the departments assess their subordinates over a given period of time often annually either by comparing the latter's performance with previous ones' and reporting the results to the personnel office, or by filling a form prepared by the organisation itself inquiring about the employee.

#### *3.2.2.1 Assessment during work at LAUL*

The librarian claimed in the interview that staff appraisal during work at LAUL is a 'continuous process'. All the interviewed staff, however, reported that appraisal occurs only once per year and specifically at the end of the month of September. When the librarian was confronted with the responses of the staff members on this issue, she commented that the evaluation made in September is the formal appraisal required by the university administration to know about the performance of each employee, and is used for promotion, while the appraisal(s) done during the year is/are used to assess and to remedy any poor achievements. Then she was asked to reveal how does this remedy take

place, her answer was “by drawing the employee’s attention to his/her shortcoming and urging him/her to improve his/her performance. In case the staff member does not respond, he/she will be subjected to some training sessions if the defect is in the professional performance, but if the failure is due to bad conduct such as illegal absences or creating troubles with his/her colleagues, then he/she will be punished either by deduction from the annual leave or from the salary, and in case he/she shows no progress, firing is the cure”.

The librarian was asked then how training is done since there is no trainer in the library, she replied that in such a case she does this job personally.

The librarian concluded her talk on this topic stating that till now she has never found any poor performance from her staff that necessitates training or punitive measures.

### ***3.3 Measuring appraisal***

There are a number of different methods for measuring employee performance. Three of the most simple methods, according to Bryson(9) are: *ranking, graphic rating scales* and *checklists*.

*Ranking:* With this method employees are compared with each other in order to create a simple rank order of worth. The appraiser merely rates a number of people simultaneously and produces an accurate rank order.

*Graphic rating scales:* This method identifies certain factors to be rated such as neatness, personality, leadership, initiative, loyalty, dependability, attendance etc. Employees are assessed according to these factors on a four or five degree scale of rating. Although this method is very popular it is time-consuming, especially when there is a large number of staff to be assessed.

*Checklists:* Here a series of questions is presented concerning the employee to which the ratter answers by 'yes' or 'no'. Questions may be put by the personnel departments.

Sample questions on a checklist are:

Is the employee always neat and tidy?                      Yes/No

Are orders always followed?                                      Yes/No

Does the employee come on time?                                Yes/No

The disadvantages of this method is that it does not provide the degree of scrutiny required for appraising performance.

### *3.3.1 Measuring staff performance at LAUL*

At LAUL as has been mentioned above, there is an appraisal form known as "Evaluation of non-academic personnel" (See appendix III). It includes the name, position and division of the member of the staff. Performance is measured using a graphic rating scale

of five points (1 = outstanding; 2 = very good; 3 = adequate; 4 = below standard, 5 = poor, NA= not applicable). There are ten factors to be rated in addition to comments on each factor. At the end of the form there are two paragraphs, one for overall evaluation and the other for comments and recommendations.

When the librarian was asked in the interview about her opinion of this form, she showed no objections against it and considered it fair and far from subjective. It also gives the head of the department room to express their point of view through the comments and recommendations.

### ***3.4 Staff appraisal in the Fielden Report***

A study was conducted by the John Fielden Consultancy (10) on human resource management in British academic libraries and showed that many institutions had different types of appraisal schemes varying in purpose, the relationship to promotion, the appraiser's identity and in the information that can be used within the appraisal process. The study concluded that the effectiveness of these schemes is patchy, and recommended that the effectiveness of the existing staff appraisal schemes should be reviewed every three years and ought to be done by the personnel department rather than the library managers.

According to the librarian, the evaluation form at LAUL is used to improve the performance of the members of the staff and for promotion and it is updated every five years.

Julie Parry (11) claims that the Fielden's recommendations lack conviction, and that a satisfactory approach should stress the purpose of the appraisal and indicate how services to users can benefit from a well-conducted scheme.

At LAUL, the librarian said that there is no intention in the time being to change the scheme of the appraisal because the administration considers the actual scheme satisfactory.

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. SUPERVISION

When asked to describe their job, library supervisors usually answer that it is related to professional work in reference and technical and readers' services without any indication to the managerial side of staff supervision. "It seems that [ most of the ] supervisors are not very clear what supervision entails, or else that they do not see it as an important part of their job." (1) In fact the supervisor in a library who identifies with his staff and encourages pride in accomplishment, and who stimulates co-operation toward the common good, contributes significantly to the effectiveness of the library and to staff morale (2).

At LAUL, the supervision between the supervisors and subordinates is manifested only in checking the attendance. Nine out of the ten staff interviewed reported that the quality of work and performance are seldom checked. The cataloguer only stated that her work was supervised by the Technical Services Manager who verifies the subject headings before the cards are processed.

Supervision is often manifested in staff training and development. But in order to carry out a capable training course of action, there should be simple uncomplicated channels of

communication. Bad circulation of communication leads to disturbances of dissemination of messages and hinders any step towards progress.

The following lines will be dedicated to expansion and elaboration on these two aspects of staff management: communication and training in university libraries and the role they play to acquire sound supervision process.

#### ***4.1 Communication***

Communication is a process by which the management functions of planning, organising, decision-making, controlling, motivating and leading are carried out (3). It is the means by which people are linked together in an organisation in order to achieve a central purpose(4). Communication is the hallmark of good management (5). To work properly, communication require commitment policy (6). Organisations in which communication channels are blocked or severely limited or where information required to conduct one's job is withheld or censored, cannot achieve their goals and objectives (7).

The key elements of the communication process are: a source, a message, a receiver, feedback and a noise. The source is the person or element who is responsible for encoding an intended meaning into a message. This may be the person who translates his/her thoughts (the message) into a language with the hope that it can be understood by others. The receiver decodes the message into a perceived meaning. Feedback from



receiver to source serves either to confirm the message or to show that it has not been received correctly. Noise is anything present in the perceived signal that was not part of the originally intended message (8).

Communication skills are extremely important for librarians. Not only do librarians have to communicate with each other in issuing or responding to directives, but also in carrying out the functions of the management and in dealing with the library users. In addition, the nature of the librarians' job requires them to assess, select, process and disseminate vehicles of communication in the form of books, films, cassettes, on-line catalogues, CD-ROMs and to provide information services to the users. Librarians must be experts in recognizing the most appropriate means that will provide information to a large number of people, and must continually update their knowledge about new emerging communication techniques which will make their tasks more efficient and effective (9).

Communications are used in the planning process to obtain information relating to the internal and external environment of the library. Top managers communicate with individuals and groups both from within and outside the library to gain such information for the needs of assessment and situation audit using reports, personal contacts and meetings. Mid-level managers discuss the implications of managerial policies and overall goals with top management and turn, their strategies for implementation with first-line management.

#### *4.1 Communication at LAUL*

In an attempt to assess communication at LAUL, the interviewed staff were asked to rate the communication system in the library on a 0-5 scale (0 = no communication, 5= excellent). Since a five point rating system was used, the communication system would score 50 only if all the ten staff interviewed judged it excellent, that is all of them gave it 5 points, and consequently 50 will be the highest score. The actual score reported is calculated by the summation of the points given by all the respondents. The following are the data obtained:

Table 3 : Communication within the department

No. of respondents	Points	Total
6	5	30
3	4	12
1	2	2
		<hr/>
		44/50

Table 4: Communication between different departments

No. of respondents	Points	Total
1	5	5
1	4	4
7	3	21
1	2	2

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32/50

Table 5: Communication between a specific department and the librarian

No. of respondents	Points	Total
3	4	12
5	3	15
2	2	4

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31/50

As it can be deduced, the communication system is very efficient within every department and becomes weaker when the communication related the department to another one or with the librarian

## *4.2 Methods of communication*

There are two methods of communication: Oral and written including the electronic media.

### 4.2.1 Oral methods of communications:

These could be through personal contacts and meetings:

#### *Personal contacts:*

It is good practice to establish a two-way system of communication so that information passes from the management level to all employees, and vice versa. Industrial psychologists appear to agree that personal face-to-face communication is the most effective form of communication provided that the contact is two-way.

A good communicator should be a good listener or else the full benefits of a two-way communication will be lost. Poor listening is one of the most inhibiting features for the communication of ideas. A library manager who is a good listener can gain invaluable information from subordinates in solving job related problems.

Good listeners do not interrupt or attempt to finish others' sentences. They are patient, allowing the other party plenty of time. They try to put the other party's position and look at things from their point of view. Good listeners never show anger or criticise the other party. Listening skills can be improved through practice, training and concentration (10).

*Meetings:*

“A meeting is a communication process which brings together a group of people with a common interest, to accomplish some purpose or goal. The sharing of knowledge and experience allows participants to be involved in planning, decision-making, problem-solving, negotiating, evaluation, consultation and/or information dissemination” (11).

It may be possible that a limited part of the business system of small libraries could be conducted by person-to-person communication, but there is insufficient time to give all instructions or all opinions individually, and thus staff meetings are used as a substitute.

The importance of meetings lies in the process of decision-making when a decision needs judgment rather than experience or when a set of ideas improves the chances of good decision. They are also important where it is necessary to get the participants' acceptance of the decision.

Sometimes meetings are useful to establish regular contact between the employees whether these meetings are held on a departmental or interdepartmental basis.

In libraries, meetings are usually called for at lower levels in the hierarchy for problem-solving purposes, for dissemination of information to subordinates, and/or for the passage of feedback from subordinates to management. The upper levels of management meet mainly for planning purposes, to allocate resources and make decisions on a corporate basis (12).

Usually, the first practical problem is finding suitable accommodation for a meeting. Very few libraries are equipped with suitable committee rooms, and often there is considerable pressure on university committee rooms. If people from a variety of organisations or departments are meeting, it is often best that this be on neutral territory. The room and seating arrangements could affect the outcome of the meeting. A round or oval table is better for problem-solving and group discussion; participants should be comfortably seated in a business-like manner with room to move and the ability to see clearly all members. There should be no noise distractions or interruptions although in the case of long meetings, breaks should be scheduled with refreshments of non-alcoholic beverages. The size of the room should give also the impression of being comfortably full but not crowded. Attention should be given to seating arrangements so that people likely to be in conflict or confrontation with each other are not placed opposite each other.

Conducting meetings is an art by itself which not everyone possesses. By his/her own conduct, the chairman/woman can encourage or discourage discussion. The questions which he/she uses to stimulate the discussion need some thought if they are to be effective and should not be framed in such a way that they permit a 'yes-no' answer; they should not betray the chairman's own opinions or contain the anticipated answer. The tone of voice which the chairman/woman uses should be as neutral as possible.

It is very important even that meetings are held in a non-threatening environment, and it is essential to circulate the agenda before each meeting and to record the minutes.

#### *4.2.1.1 Oral methods of communications at LAUL*

These methods take the form of personal contacts and telephone calls through which the librarian advises the staff and receives their feedback.

Meetings are another form of oral methods of communication at LAUL. They are rare, and usually held once per three months in the librarian's office where interruptions by telephone calls are frequent and the space is small and uncomfortable. They are used for information dissemination through the delivery of announcements and for the exposure of future plans and of the latest achievements.

In the interview, every staff member was asked to estimate the percentage of the total oral communication covered by meetings, telephone calls and personal contacts. The average of the different percentages was calculated and here is the outcome:

Table 6: Percentage of the total oral communication reported by LAUL staff

Meetings 10%

Telephone calls 30%

Personal contacts 60%

Because most of the staff members are lodged in the same room facing the librarian, personal contacts are more frequent than telephone calls which are restricted to communication between people staying in remote areas in the library.

#### *4.2.2 Written methods of communication:*

Among the methods of communication, probably the most effective is oral communication backed up by a written message. Written messages have good effect when the information is relevant for some time. However, the advantages of these



messages reside in the possibility of circulating them to all staff and in the possibility of being retained for future reference. The disadvantages are that these messages may not be very effective because there is little opportunity for staff to ask questions or seek clarification; there is also a possibility that they may not be fully understood(13). Also these messages will be poor if the feedback is slow and cumbersome.

Written methods of communication include annual reports, newsletters, staff journals and letters to staff including notices and memoranda.

#### Annual reports:

As a basis for the regular formal review of a library's performance and operation, the annual report is an important means of formal internal communication; it should be shared with all staff as well as with the person or body to which it is submitted.

The nature, format, content, and significance of the annual report is most likely to be established by institutional requirements, attitudes, and approaches. Most often the annual report is intended to be a record of the year's accomplishments. It may also include detailed information on staff appointments, promotions, resignations and retirements, and major gifts and acquisitions.

The library annual report provides an account of the library activities for the last year; it is constructed from information and material presented in the annual report of the

different departments of the library. Every departmental report is usually presented in a standardised format to facilitate the integration and consolidation of information of information and statistics appearing in it. That is especially true for statistical data related to any addition to the collection.

In libraries, managers are required to write and submit reports on a regular or irregular basis. The purpose of these reports is to communicate to top management or boards of committees at the ownership level information needed for decisions making.

At the end of each fiscal year, which may be tied to the calendar year, library managers will be involved in organising their library's annual report that will be integrated into the organisation's annual report.

In general, annual reports of the library are often considered as documents with several purposes. They can be used to acknowledge staff achievements and provide details on internal issues. They contain statistical data and can be used in interlibrary comparisons and in fund raising (14).

They can be also an effective form of internal formal communication because they outline the state of the library and provide some broad information and direction for all the staff. They also serve purposes unrelated to formal internal communication, like compilation and reporting of overall data and statistics for historical and record-keeping purposes as required by the library and other outside institutions.

### Newsletters:

Newsletters can be used as a means of publishing not only items of interest about library development, organisational and administrative details, promotions, new members of staff, but also items of general professional interest such as courses, conferences and news concerning members of the library staff.

As libraries grow in size and complexity, it is no longer possible for individual staff members to have frequent and regular contact with each other. It may become desirable then to issue a staff newsletter, to help in communication.

The regular issuing of a newsletter is a very considerable chore and there are numerous examples of library newsletters which appeared regularly only for a short period after which their issuing became irregular and ceased completely. Library staff are not always ready to prepare items for a publication of this kind. If the publication is going to be rich in information it must be compiled by one of the senior members of staff who is also usually one of the people with least time to spare for such kind of work (15).

Format, frequency, content, means of production and distribution of staff newsletters vary considerably from library to library. It is particularly difficult to recommend specific guidelines in a situation in which individuality is so significant.

### Staff journals:

They help to establish a sense of organisational identity; unless they are produced frequently they are not good vehicles for the rapid dissemination of information to staff. Such journals usually concentrate on social and personnel achievements, or carry information that will remain newsworthy for sometime, such as health and safety advice.

### Letters to staff:

These include notices, memoranda and electronic mail messages. Their benefit lies in the quick dissemination of urgent notes.

There are many occasions in which communication is in the form of a letter to the library staff. While this may seem an unnecessary formality in some situations, and particularly in smaller libraries, it is often important for clarity and understanding to convey certain information and decisions in writing forms.

Formal internal written communication can be manifested by the distribution of official memos either at the administrative level such as a statement of changes in library hours, or the departmental level like a statement of changes in departmental hours or staffing schedules.

Memos should be clear and direct, simple and accurate, and should be distributed in a timely fashion to all staff who are affected. The information about the decisions made should be communicated in ample time to allow administrators, managers, and staff to respond to, and implement policy and procedural matters as required. Memos and other written communication should be distributed either directly or indirectly through a distribution chain to all staff concerned. If a memo is distributed to each department for circulation among the staff, additional time is needed to be allowed between its initial distribution and further distribution to be comprehended easily by the staff. Other written communication like the minutes of the meetings play an important role in the management and operation of libraries. In many cases it is useful to summarise in written form the content and results of a particular discussion or meeting in order to be distributed for further review by the members involved because it is difficult to remember in detail the decisions taken or the results of a particular meeting or discussion. It is helpful to all involved to have the opportunity to review a written summary of the event and to have available an action document that clearly outlines the responsibilities that each person may have agreed to assume.

Sometimes the presentation of new ideas, or suggestions for changes in a policy or procedure, can best be done in written form. This allows both for the wider distribution of material and for the opportunity to read, and re-read, and reflect upon a matter. Even where new ideas or suggestions for changes in a policy or procedure are discussed in oral

form first, it may be helpful subsequently to commit that material and information to a written form for appropriate review and further discussion before action is taken.

#### *4.2.2.1 Written forms of communication at LAUL*

Written methods of communication at LAUL are in the form of memoranda, annual reports, statistical data and surveys, book reviews and questionnaires. No newsletter and staff journal are issued at LAUL. The librarian attributed the absence of these publications to the size of the library and to the possibility of staff news dissemination during meetings. However, the librarians in both Beirut and Byblos campuses are contributors in the library journal issued by the Lebanese Library Association (LLA).

Memoranda include directives, comments, vacations notices and any other personal notes.

Annual reports are prepared by the staff to be submitted to the librarian. In this report the staff summarise all their activities during that year and include any statistics if they are relevant. The statistical data are requested mainly from the LAs who have to enumerate the items catalogued and purchased per month, questions asked per day, items borrowed every day and to which class number or category they belong, and finally the number of students using the reading room and questions asked at the reference desk per day. These statistical data are submitted to the TSM and RSM in the form of written reports.

Surveys and studies are carried out by the TSM and RSM after analysing the data collected from their subordinates in the fields of cataloguing, acquisition and readers services. Besides this the TSM and RSM have to review some books that are considered beneficial to the library.

Book reviews are prepared and collected by the acquisition department which sends them to the librarian. The latter studies them and sends the suitable of them to the teaching faculty members for selection.

Questionnaires are mainly the job of the circulation desk, and they are oriented to the students and aim at collecting their comments and suggestions.

*Channels of communication:*

Communication is transmitted by means of two channels: formal and informal.

The extent to which formal and informal channels of communication are used within libraries depends on the type, size, complexity and corporate culture of the library organisation. If the library is large, then library managers and information staff will communicate both formally and informally within the library's lateral and hierarchical structure; and outside of the structure with the policy-making bodies, users and

colleagues in other libraries . If the library is small, then there will be little or no need for formal intradepartmental communication.

#### *Channels of communication at LAUL*

The size of the LAUL permits the existence of both formal and informal channels of communication, and so, two channels of communication prevail in the library.

#### Formal channels of communication:

There are three kinds of formal channels of communication: downward, upward and horizontal.

#### *Formal channels of communication at LAUL*

There are three kinds of formal channels of communication at LAUL: downward, upward and horizontal, and thus the librarians and her staff communicate within the library's lateral and hierarchical structure.



### Downward communication:

People work better when they know exactly what their supervisors want of them, what their duties, responsibilities, and privileges are. These need to know what is expected of them perhaps not in minute detail, but certainly in general terms. For this reason management and supervisors must issue directives and policy and procedural statement to those in lower positions (16).

Downward communication is also used to transmit corporate goals and objectives, directives, and so on to subordinates. Downward communication is also involved in the strategic planning process when new decisions have to be implemented. It is manifested in written form as policy or procedure manuals, corporate plans, job description and memoranda. Oral forms of downward communication appear in addresses or speeches, meetings, appraisal interviews and in discussions or conversations. In many cases downward communication does not occur by itself, ideas and information are passed upward in return.

### Downward communication at LAUL

Through downward communication, the librarian conveys the working strategy and division of labour to the different library departments. Downward communication is also used by the TSM, RSM and the LAs for transmitting policies, procedures and directives to their subordinates, and for implementing plans and decisions. The media used in this

kind of channel are written and oral ones. The written are in the form of memoranda and letters, while the oral are through meetings (though few) or telephone calls and personal contacts. Downward communication includes sometimes information about the successful achievements or projects of other libraries and information centers in order to copy or emulate some of them at LAUL

When heads of the departments were asked in the interview to report on the major media of downward communication used in their departments, they gave the following percentages:

Table 7: Percentages of the media used in LAUL departments as reported by the head of departments

	Oral	Written
Reference Department	75%	25%
Cataloguing Department	20%	80%
Acquisition Department	40%	60%
Serials Department	75%	25%
Circulation Department	50%	50%

It is apparent from this table that the reference and serial departments rely mainly on oral downward communication, while the cataloguing department relies mainly on the written

form; both forms are equally used in the circulation department. So the library as a whole has almost an equal use of the oral and written downward form of communication.

#### Upward communication:

Through upward communication information is sent from the subordinate to the supervisor to provide oral and written feedback in the form of reports or memoranda to the management.

Upward communication should be encouraged as it provides feedback on how well employees understand downward communication. It should be allowed to occur freely and continuously, not just when management wants to hear it.

Upward communication can also occur in the form of requests for clarification on some issues, policies or procedures.

#### Upward communication at LAUL

Here the information is sent from the subordinates to the supervisors in response to their requests. It includes annual reports, statistical data, surveys, studies and sometimes book reviews for the acquisition section. These surveys, studies and book reviews are conveyed to the librarian through written reports.

In the interview the subordinates mentioned that they use this channel of communication also to express their grievances or complaints, or to hand in their sick report in case of illness, or to inform about their personal future plans in the library such as vacations or annual leave or even about their wish to change the interior decoration of their offices. Most of this information is transmitted in written form, and on few occasions orally through meetings, personal interviews and sometimes through telephone calls.

#### Horizontal communication:

Horizontal channels of communication are used between people of the same level within the library or with colleagues in other libraries and sometimes with library users through overdue notices.

Horizontal communication within both libraries and parent organisations is manifested in the form of memos and reports. Messages are exchanged between departments and individuals about problems, decisions which have been made or activities which may affect them. Sometimes copies of these messages are circulated among departments and individuals for information purposes.

Communication in this channel is one-way. Unless the receiver makes a special effort, little feedback or discussion takes place. This applies also to electronic communication systems such as electronic mail and other office communication systems.

Direct contact between individuals is usually the most efficient form of horizontal communication. Face-to-face situations are preferable to telephone conversations, as they allow for verbal and non-verbal communications.

#### Horizontal communication at LAUL

This communication process flows between the employees of the same level in the library such as between TSM and RSM and among the LAs and between colleagues from other libraries like in the annual meeting of the Lebanese Library Association (LLA) which is held usually at LAU. Horizontal communication takes place also between the employees and the readers. The information is either oral or written: Oral through personal contacts or telephone calls, or by means of interviews and meetings. Written channels exist in the form of reports and memoranda. Written horizontal communication could be with the readers also when some departments or units ask students to evaluate and criticise the library performance either through questionnaires or through a suggestion box.

Sometimes horizontal communication at LAUL may not have any feedback because the messages conveyed are informative like announcing to the readers about the latest collection or notifying the peer employees.

*Informal channels of communication:*

"Informal communications is a natural phenomenon of human nature. It arises from the social relationship of people."(17)

Informal communication channels distribute information which may not have been communicated officially. It is used to a large extent on the information desk and at the issue desk.

An informal method of communication which exists in every library is the 'grapevine' , or in other words : gossip. The 'grapevine' is the most widely recognised form of informal communication. It follows no set patterns of content or direction, moves in various communication networks, and comes from the informal or social organisation among employees. It is fast, highly selective and discriminating. It provides management with insights into employee attitudes, helps in spreading useful information and provides a safety valve for employee emotions.

The grapevine if tapped wisely, can be an excellent source of information. It can tell management what activities certain individuals or groups are engaged in, what their future plans are, and how they feel about the library's conditions and goal. Some of the information in the grapevine is accurate and some is not. The wise manager listens

carefully and discovers the situations which are potentially troublesome. Once they are recognised these can be discussed either with individuals or with employee groups, and the situation clarified. The grapevine also allows people to 'let off steam'. Employees cannot usually talk to their superiors, and some of them feel better when they can talk over their problems with others rather than bottling them up. For the person who has a strong need for recognition, the grapevine serves a useful purpose. This person can be the conveyor of news of major importance. Grapevines may however spread false rumours.

"As The grapevine cuts across all administrative lines, its direction is being determined by the social contact and friendship among the individuals on the library staff ... An active system of formal communication often strengthens the grapevine as the two systems [formal or informal] are to some extent complementary; what is true is that in the absence of good official communication the content of the grapevine is likely to become more tenuous and more harmful to library morale and staff relations generally. In general it is true to say the official communication contains more information, in the form of commands, policy statements and factual surveys, than opinion. Informal communication in contrast, contains a considerable volume of opinion and attitudes."(18)

### *Informal channels of communication at LAUL*

The grapevine is the most widely recognised form of informal communication and this is applicable at LAUL. The grapevine links various levels and areas of the library. It is a fast form of communication which is highly selective and discriminating. The grapevine is a very prominent means of communication at LAUL and this was acknowledged by all the ten staff members interviewed. All of them however denied resorting to it as a means of communication and ascribed its use only to other staff members. The grapevine is more frequent in departments which are occupying the same room like cataloguing and acquisition. This could be attributed to higher chances of friction and conflict between the staff members. The librarian is never involved in informal discussion, on the opposite she tries to reconcile everybody and to release the tension that arises between the staff.



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## CHAPTER FIVE

### *5. STAFF DEVELOPMENT*

“The term ‘Staff development and training’ is taken to mean all planned activities which enable staff to do their jobs, and to prepare themselves to meet changing demands, whether through formal, informal or external methods” (1). Staff development is the process of modifying employee behaviour and attitudes in a way that increases the probability of goal attainment (2). This could be achieved through proper training. Training, however, cannot create ability in the absence of capability nor transform an ordinary mentality into brilliance, neither can it create skill where aptitude does not exist. It can only develop the potential that is already there.

Staff development and training is viewed as an essential investment in improving institutional performance and achieving future goals (3).

Poor training can lead to low productivity because the staff member is not introduced adequately to the work strategies and/or familiarized with the use of some equipment(4). Low output may also be caused by the supervisor’s lack of skill in training people or in recognising machine inadequacy.

Many general weaknesses in the library can be remedied, or partly so, by training.

Individual training needs can be identified during the performance appraisal interview, which may also be used to identify areas where training is required by one department or the whole organisation. Individual training is usually carried out on the job, with the immediate supervisor politely and considerately pointing out weaknesses and making suggestions as to how to overcome them.

Because libraries are often unprepared to meet non routine demand for staff training, inexperienced trainers may be assigned the training function. Self-education is crucial for inexperienced librarians faced with developing or improving training programmes. New trainers need to master three major functions: planning for training; the face-to-face act of training people, and the management of training facilities, personnel, and operations(5).

Training programmes and courses cannot concentrate solely on existing staff; they also need to provide for new recruits. Attitudes and approaches developed early in an individual's employment are likely to last and if not appropriate will be very difficult to remedy later. So a prompt introduction to organisational and department norms and procedures is crucial and will require considerable managerial involvement to ensure a consistent set of standards across the department(6).

At whatever level an appointment may be made, it is fundamental that all new members of staff should receive adequate training. It is essential to encourage a sense of belonging

and participation, and to this end, training is a preliminary activity and helps to promote job satisfaction.

Professional staff, although fully qualified by examinations and in some cases by experience in other libraries, will all need some training in the practices of the individual library. For preference they should first be allowed to spend a week or so in each of the main sections of the library under the eye of the supervisor. The purpose would be orientation and learning in very broad terms the place of that section in the overall organisation of the library. The two most important sections in this respect would be the administrative and bibliographic services. As the new professionals are likely to have frequent contacts with other senior officers of the parent organisation, they should be introduced to their opposite members in the other departments of the university. Each newcomer must be made aware of his/her own particular responsibilities, be given a copy of the organisation's chart of the library and the chain of command so that he/she knows to whom and for whom he/she is responsible.

Two factors are needed to acquire a successful training:

1) *The trainee's commitment to change*: knowledge of management theories rarely leads to a change in behaviour. Deliberate and intensive efforts must be made to apply the theories. According to Myers (7) the application of theory generally requires a four-step process:

Step one, *awareness*

Step two, *understanding*

Step three, *commitment to change*

Step four, *new habits*.

The first step, *awareness*, may result from reading a book or article, attending a workshop, listening to a convincing speech. The person gains superficial insight into a new theory and the implied deficiency in his/her present way of doing things. Step two, *understanding*, may result when the person recognises a possible need to change. This is the 'intellectual condition stage'. The person might read more and attend seminars and training programmes, even to the point of becoming an articulate sales person on behalf of the theory, but his/her management style continues to follow old habit patterns. The next step *commitment to change*, is the most important one in the process. It occurs when the person becomes aware of the discrepancy between his/her adopted theory and everyday behaviour, and believes that he/she would benefit personally through changing his/her behaviour. Step four, *new habits*, is established when sustained deliberate application of the new theory finally results in attitude changes and automatic and natural expressions of the desired changes in style of management. For change in management style, getting through stage 4 can take five to ten years. Most people according to Myers, never progress beyond step 2.

2) *Supervisor's or institution's commitment to change:*

Robinson and Robinson(8) put the responsibility of the success of training on more than the trainee. Skills are transferred when both learning experience and work environment work together to achieve the same results. Line management must ensure that the environment supports, reinforces and rewards the learner for using the new skills and knowledge.

Schreiber(9) finds the presence of a coach necessary to help a trainee returning from a workshop, practise the skills learned. Much like an athletic coach, Schreiber stresses that there should be someone there to encourage, provide reinforcement, and offer constructive corrective advice as one goes about the work. The likelihood of transferring skills without coaching is low. Until performance reflects new skills, it cannot be said that the skills have been learned. To set up a coaching experience, there needs to be teamwork among three key individuals: the seminar participant, his/her supervisor, and the seminar leader.

Participants must be willing to forget temporary their professional roles and their need to be seen as fully competent and to become students again.

Also, if participants are clear on which skills they intend to learn they demonstrate a high level of personal initiative about learning these skills and be better focused on how they can use them on the job. Skills transfer is given its best chance when:

“- Coaching opportunities are built into design of the training workshop

- There is clear understanding and agreement between workshop leader and participants about content and methods of the seminar.

- Before leaving the workshop, participants do specific strategy planning with actions steps and time lines.

- Back-on-the-job coaching begins as soon as they return from the workshop and continues till learning is completed and new behaviour is acquired.

- Feedback is recognized as a primary tool of the coaching experience, i.e. feedback about both successes and failures” (10).

A good training programme should be based upon the needs of the learner, that is on what the learner needs to know or should be able to do. It should be shaped to provide balance and flow as well as to provide many good ideas which could easily be put into practice. Learning materials should be varied in order to avoid boredom. A combination of didactic and experiential methods is necessary.

Lipow(11) suggests ten conditions that an effective library training programme should meet in order to ensure successful training:

“1. The training programme should be relevant to the needs of the trainee and should be perceived as relevant by the trainee.



2. There should be a three-way agreement about the objectives of the training programme among the trainee, the trainer, and the trainee's boss.
3. There should be a three-way agreement about the expectations of the trainee among the trainee, the trainer, and the trainee's boss.
4. Supervisors or higher-level managers ideally should attend a session of any training programme they are planning for those who report to them.
5. Supervisors and trainees should plan the programme follow-up.
6. A supervisor or a higher level manager should agree that there will be no blame for a trainee's slip-ups during the follow-up practice.
7. The trainee should have the training session with a plan specifying how specific learned skills, attitudes, theories etc. will be practices and applied.
8. After the workshop, the trainee should practice with a coach and preferably another workshop trainee so that they can agree to coach each other.
9. The trainee should be scheduled to give a progress report two weeks, two months, and six months after the workshop describing specific applications of what was learned.
10. The institution should strive for achieving a critical mass of staff or managers competent in the desired skill. The critical mass will have been reached when those who possessed the skill set the dominant standard. The sooner that critical mass is reached, the earlier the desired change will be effective and the library's desired goals will be reached."

### *5.1 Senior staff development*

Senior staff development is the process by which managers obtain skills, experiences and attitudes that they need to become or remain successful leaders in their organisations.

There are several reasons for using management development, among them:

“1) Reducing or preventing managerial obsolescence by keeping the manager up-to-date in the field.

2) Raising the manager’s overall effectiveness.

3) Increasing the manager’s satisfaction with the job” (12)

The type of training given to supervisory managers is not the same as that provided at the middle and upper levels of hierarchy. This involves: workshops, coaching plus on-the-job experience, self-study courses, external conference and seminars, participation in university programmes, association and professional conferences and workshops and consultant programmes.

Senior staff development focuses on the following fields(13), (14) :

- Managing time
- Team building
- Organising and planning
- Evaluating and appraising employees
- Coping with stress

- Understanding human behaviour
- Self-analysis
- Motivating others
- Financial management and budgeting
- Holding effective meetings
- Oral communication
- Labour/management relations
- Decision making
- Developing strategies and policies

### ***5.2 Staff development at LAUL***

Staff development at LAUL is practised in the following cases:

- 1) New employment
- 2) Transfer from a department to another
- 3) Introduction of new equipment
- 4) Senior staff development.

### New employment

When a new member of staff employed at LAUL, he/she is given an introduction session on the job and a demonstration on the use of equipment utilized in work. The newcomer is trained only in the department in which he/she is appointed and does not rotate along other departments of the library.

According to the staff interviewed, this session does not last more than 1-2 days. There was a consensus among the staff that these sessions cannot be labeled as training because so much information is poured at one time without giving a chance to the new recruit to grasp and practise what has been exposed.

These sessions are not conducted by the librarian or by a trainer, but the peer employees who may not be talented enough and may not possess the proper skills needed for training. Also these peer employees do not follow up on the new recruit because they felt that training is not their responsibility, and thus leave him/her on his/her own.

The interviewed staff insisted that the training is poor and inadequate and left many gaps that had to be filled by the new employee himself/herself through personal inquiry. The interviewees attributed their success at work to their own initiative and effort.

In the interview when the librarian was asked to give her opinion about training at LAUL, she admitted that the training offered had its weaknesses and defects, but she could not do

anything about it due to budget constraint; and the trainee has to suffer a little bit at the beginning. According to her, the quality of the work does not suffer from this kind of training because the employees are always selected from a big pool of applicants, making the selection of high calibre personnel easy; in addition most of the appointed staff are LAU graduates in Library Science who have worked in this library previously during their study and are familiar to the strategy of work. Even those coming from other libraries to work at LAUL were able to find their way on their own, though with some difficulties.

#### Transfer from a department to another

If a member of staff is transferred from one department to another, he/she is trained for the new job either by the previous employee occupying that post or by the librarian if that employee has resigned. In this case also the training session will last for 1-2 days.

In the interview, both the librarian and the staff agreed that no difficulties were encountered in trans-department training, because the size of the library permits all the staff to have an idea about each others' work through personal contact.

Transfer usually occurs at LAUL in the form of promotion. In this context, the example of the typist who studied Library Science and was promoted to the cataloguing department could be listed. In this case she had a previous idea about the library work either during her studies or through observation while typing.

### New equipment

When new equipment and machines are introduced at LAUL, the library staff, including the librarian, are required to attend training sessions on the usage of these appliances. These sessions are held during the weekends and are run by experts and professionals delegated by their respective companies.

Usually such training extends over 3-4 weeks in order to give a chance for the employees to apply what they have learned during the week and to raise their questions, ask for clarifications and inquire in the forthcoming weekend about some of the problems they have faced.

### Senior staff development

According to the librarian, the methods used in senior staff development at LAUL include: workshops, seminars and participation in university programmes and in associations and professional conferences. The training focuses on budgeting, organising and planning.

The librarian reported in the interview that the training she received has broadened her knowledge in management and enabled her to initiate new activities in managing financial and human resource issues. It helped her also in implementing some new

theories she has been exposed to during the training sessions, and in using time properly and efficiently.

She added that she has acquired through training some of the skills needed for motivating staff, appraisal of subordinates, verbal and written communication and for setting of objectives and priorities. She learned also how to form working teams and how to collaborate with them to achieve the goals of the library.

Her only criticism was that senior staff development is not a regular process at LAUL and should recur more often.

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## CHAPTER SIX

### 6. MOTIVATION

The word *motivation* comes from the Latin word *movere* which means to move. The term refers today to the process of stimulating people to action by means of incentives and inducements and is concerned with the factors that incite people to develop and sustain a particular mode of behaviour(1). Motivation may be defined also as the total propensity or level of desire of an individual to behave in a certain manner at a certain time (2).

Motivation has three primary ingredients: *ability*, *effort* and *desire*. *Ability* is the individual's capacity to do something, *effort* is the time and energy expended by the individual in pursuit of an objective, while *desire* is the wish or urge for a particular objective.

Motivating staff is a complex and delicate business, and it penetrates in all phases of staff management from job analysis and description to staff selection, appraisal and training.

To motivate staff, supervisors should know what different groups of people need from their work. Disregarding these needs will lead to poor motivation characterised by low staff morale and weak staff performance. (3)

Motivation is a measure of leader's effectiveness. Hannabuss depicted motivation as follows: "since people are human, changing from day to day, deceiving each other and themselves in subtle ways constantly, wishes, needs, drives change too, and the work place itself may bring about such change. Consequently, for managers in organisations, a knowledge of human motivation is very useful both as an insight into behaviour, and as an ingredient for personnel management and team organisation." (4)

Decisions about organisational structure and staff deployment need also to be made with some knowledge and application of motivation theories in order to get the work done efficiently and effectively.

Theories of motivation have two different approaches, the *content approach* and the *process approach*. *Process theories* attempt to identify and explain how behaviour is started, initiated, sustained, redirected, and terminated. One of the most famous *process theories* is that of Vroom, who contends that motivation is the summation of valence times expectancy. While theoretical in nature, the model is useful in explaining individual differences in work motivation.

*Content theories* attempt to explain what motivates people and try to identify needs that should be met, or values that should be attained if a worker is to be motivated (5).

There are three major *content theories*, and these are :

1. *Maslow theory*: It is based on a need hierarchy of five levels which are physical needs (like food, shelter, material life-support etc.) at the base, safety needs (such as security and order), social needs or belonging needs (e.g. identification, affection and friendly contacts), esteem or ego needs ( success, self-respect) and at the top self-actualization (fulfilling one's potential). When needs at one level are satisfied, they no longer serve as motivators, and individuals move to the next level in the hierarchy.

2. *Herzberg's theory*:

Herzberg developed and extended Maslow's theory. Herzberg's theory is based on two factors, the *hygiene factors* and *motivators*. *Hygiene factors* will not motivate people by their presence but will lead to dissatisfaction by their absence, examples include money, good working conditions and technical supervision. *Motivators* are factors that bring about satisfaction and result in motivation. Examples are achievement, recognition, responsibility and advancement.

3. *McGregor's theory*:

McGregor tried to show that people work best by directing their own efforts towards organisational objectives rather than by requiring to be driven and constantly directed(6). This theory was described having two parts: X and Y.

*Theory X*: assumes that workers would be passive without the direction and motivation of management.

*Theory Y*: asserts that people have the potential for development and responsibility and should be encouraged by managers to aim at the organisational goal.

Applying these theories on libraries personnel, it is obvious that library staff, like any other employees, should be motivated to become genuinely interested and concerned about their work(7). Employees will increase their efforts only if they feel that this will lead to high performance and a rewarded outcome. If they do not associate the rewards as being the outcomes of certain increased efforts or performances, there will be no motivation for further effort. Outcomes have two values for employees: the immediate or primary outcomes and the secondary outcomes. Immediate outcomes are represented by money, promotion, feeling of achievement, recognition by peers, or negatively by being avoided by fellow employees. Secondary outcomes arise out of the immediate outcomes. They include the new car which is purchased from the pay raise, the self-esteem which arises out of promotion, or the feeling of loneliness when an employee is shunned by fellow employees.

In the library, the manager can motivate his/her staff. He/she should recognise and appreciate the efforts of a reference librarian who compiles bibliography, or a cataloguer who picks up the subject headings and class number of an item quickly and correctly, or a

circulation employee who offers fast services To motivate the staff, he/she should survey also the wants of the employees and consider their needs such as sick leaves, vacations, breaks and attending courses.

Library managers can increase their employees' expectancy levels by increasing their confidence in their capacities to achieve the required level of performance. Well-trained staff will have a higher estimation of their abilities than untrained ones, because the required mental or physical skills and the knowledge of expertise to perform a task, would increase the achievement level.

Managers should also be quick to praise their staff, pointing out that the achieved desired outcomes were the result of their efforts and not the result of mere luck or fate(8).

Managers in libraries should give rewards. Rewards which lead to improved performance through increased motivation and effort do not always have to be monetary. They could be in the form of praise during a staff meeting, or a written communication from the library manager or director to members of staff. Other rewards that could be used by the manager to motivate the staff include consultation and participation in managerial decision-making, promotion to positions with higher responsibility and granting the title of "employee of the month awards".

Besides this, motivation may also be in the form of additional earnings, merited as a reward for growth, achievement and responsibility.(9) This has an advantage over salary

increase across the board. Herzberg points out that the traditional assumption of motivation by giving wage incentives across-the-board does not lead to higher motivation; this is what can be referred to as a hygiene factor. Only motivators can achieve the desired performance in employees either through morale or monetary means(10).

Motivation by library managers is also manifested through creation of an atmosphere where lower managers, i.e. , divisional heads, departmental and unit heads, work out the climate and environment that is suitable to the satisfaction sought by their subordinates.

Besides this, library managers have to familiarize themselves with the needs of the staff and the kinds of satisfaction they require whether in praise or pay. They should also be responsive to the satisfaction of employees and should not see this as a weak approach to management, rather but as a way designed to facilitate and to accommodate the variety of the changing requirements of human beings. (11)

Finally to enhance the motivation process, there is a need for library managers to discourage close supervision of staff by lower managers. Employees will strive to put in their best if managers can trust them to be self-motivated. (12)

### *6.1 Motivation at LAUL*

During the interview the librarian asserted that all her staff are motivated and concerned about the work as can be seen from their good achievement and productivity, even when overloaded.

When she was asked about the means she uses to motivate the staff, she listed the following:

- 1) Keeping the staff up-to-date by introducing the latest technology.
- 2) Encouraging them to pursue their education by allowing them to attend courses during the working hours provided they make-up for the hours of absenteeism.
- 3) Praise.
- 4) Understanding their personal problems when these cross with their work.
- 5) Writing good recommendations for the staff and asking for their promotion when she finds they deserve it.
- 6) Giving them the chance to increase their income by working over-time.

The remaining staff members were interviewed and asked whether they were motivated. Three answered positively, while seven reported that they were not motivated. Then each was asked to rate the following factors of motivation, and below are the results:



Table 8: Rating motivation factors by each LAUL staff member

<u>Motivation factors</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>	
	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Unsatisfied</u>
Promotion	1	9
Remuneration	1	9
Interesting & challenging work	6	4
Creative work	6	4
Participative decision making	1	9
Job security	8	2
Recognition by the boss	6	4
Recognition by peers	4	6
Communication	7	3
Training	2	8
Environment (Space, comfort in office etc.)	0	10

It can be seen from the above table, that the staff are unsatisfied mainly with the environment. All ten complained about the small working space and uncomfortable offices. Nine were unsatisfied also with the remuneration system at LAU and claimed that all the increases in their salary were across the board increases and not merit ones.

Nine also reported that they never participated in decision making and were never consulted by their boss when an important issue was discussed. All the staff members interviewed acknowledged, however the efforts of the librarian in recommending them for promotion, and blamed the administration for not responding to her requests.

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

### *7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS*

This work has reviewed concepts and theories in human resource management in libraries as applied to LAUL. However, strict application of these concepts and theories is not always a condition for management success. Effective management may be derived from simple experience, and many successful librarians may have never read a management book during their whole life and depended on their clear thinking and common sense in running their libraries. Nevertheless, theories and concepts of management must not be neglected completely because some of them provide an important starting point for understanding what is going on in the library and help in analysing situations and suggesting solutions to problems.

When staffing at LAUL was studied based on authoritative concepts of human resource management the following defects and weaknesses emerged.

## *1. Identification of the problems*

### *1. Space:*

Table 1 showed clearly that the library space did not increase in parallel with the concomitant increase in its holdings, staff and student number, which has created serious problems manifested by the following:

- 1) The lack of space for shelving the newly acquired items.
- 2) The circulation and Xeroxing room is always crowded with students, and their noise disturbs the readers in the nearby reading room.
- 3) The grouping of six staff members within a small working space (40m<sup>2</sup>), hinders them from concentrating and focusing on their work. They are always disturbed by the telephone calls, the sound of the typewriter and printer, and the tension and friction which rises frequently among them.

These problems produce a feeling of exasperation and lack of enthusiasm in the work.

### *2. Insufficient staff:*

The number of staff members did not increase since 1960 by the same order of magnitude as the library holdings or the number of students enrolled (See table 1). This infers that

the actual staff should more than double their efforts in order to carry on with the heavy burden they have, and conduct the work properly

The consequences of this overloading do not reflect only on the updating process of the library collection, but also on the staff morale, staff feel that in spite of all their hard and persistent work they are never able to cope up with the continuous flow of new items.

*3. Weakness in recruitment:*

Job analysis, job specification and job advertisement are lacking at LAUL as has been shown in chapter 2.

*4. Poor communication:*

Communication between the different departments, and between a specific department and the librarian is weak at LAUL as has been demonstrated in chapter 4. This reflects a lack of co-ordination and co-operation within the library.

*5. Poor training:*

As has been seen in chapter 5, training is poor and inadequate at LAUL where it is applied on a very limited and narrow scale, and it is not used effectively after staff appraisal to remedy any weaknesses of the member of the staff.

*6. Motivation:*

Nine of the staff members reported that they are not motivated and do not participate in decision making, and sometimes measures are taken by the administration without their prior knowledge. This situation has frustrated them and made them feel underestimated.

*7. Student assistants:*

During the interview, nine out of ten employees complained that student assistants are distrustful and unreliable and need very firm supervision in their work. They claimed that these students study and do their homework or chatter during working hours instead of performing their tasks and duties. A student assistant is always in a hurry to leave because every working hour is delaying him/her from studying or participating in a social activity; and this is why he/she does the work in a rush without caring whether it has been done properly or not.

Besides, most of the student assistants revealed in the interview that they are not benefiting from this work or getting experienced since they are not majoring in Library and Information Science.

## ***2. Recommendations and solutions***

The following recommendations and solutions are presented taking into consideration the limited budget of LAUL and based on ideas that could be easily implemented within the available facilities of the library. They can be a remedy to many of the library's problems.

### *1. Space:*

- 1) The serials bound volumes should be removed and replaced by microfilms or CD-ROMs if they are available on electronic media, and the space gained can be utilised as an additional stack room.
- 2) The 40m<sup>2</sup> working space should be partitioned into individual offices, albeit small, for each one of the six employees.
- 3) A Xeroxing machine should be installed outside the library to relieve the pressure in the circulation and Xeroxing room.



## *2. Staff deficiency:*

Since the library cannot afford recruiting new employees because of its limited budget, a more realistic approach to solve this problem would be by channelling the excess student assistants to posts where a considerable deficiency in staffing exists. These students would have, however, to be treated more seriously and firmly by their supervisors and it is suggested that LAUL management launches plans to motivate them by creating the title of "The best student assistant". These student assistants should be assigned work that does not need any high professional background. For example they can help in reducing the back-log in cataloguing which amounts to around 1000 items per year by entering the catalogued data prepared by the cataloguer into the computer. This step would provide more time for the cataloguer to concentrate only on the classification number and subject heading to finish and complete more items.

## *3. Recruitment weaknesses:*

Although job analysis, job specification and job advertisement do not exist in LAUL, they do not seem to affect negatively the recruitment process. Nevertheless, it is recommended that the library prepares a job analysis and a job specification because these will help the employee in identifying his/her responsibilities and in knowing what other people expect from him/her. Also it is advisable to advertise for a vacant post in the

journal issued by the Lebanese Library Association because it is read by people who may be looking for a job in a library.

#### *4. Communication:*

As for the issue of communication, it is recommended that the librarian communicates more with the different departments in the library and encourages these departments to communicate more with each other. This would be done by calling for frequent meetings that could be held outside the library in the university Conference Room where the staff could be seated comfortably and at ease to discuss any issue and to co-ordinate their work.

#### *5. Motivation:*

Regarding the issue of staff motivation, the librarian can improve it by the following:

- 1) Offering training courses to the staff whenever the need arises.
- 2) Taking the employees' opinions into account in some decisions mainly those which are directly related to their field, such as ordering new books or serials, buying new equipment or even changing the interior decoration or the library.
- 3) Introducing more technology in the library such as E-mail and networking with local and international information centres.

- 4) Introducing the rotation system, that is the rotation of staff around the library departments. This could reduce boredom which results from repetitious tasks.
- 5) Helping the staff in acquiring scholarships or attending conferences that are relevant to their work.

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## APPENDIX I

### Interviews

#### A. With the librarian of LAU

1. How is the recruitment process carried out at LAUL?
2. Who takes the final decision in recruitment?
3. Are there job analysis, job description, job satisfaction and job advertisement at LAUL?

If not why?

4. How are staff selected at LAUL?
5. Are tests included in the selection process?
6. How is resignation carried out at LAUL?
7. Is redundancy practised at LAUL? If not why?
8. What are the conditions for retirement at LAUL?
9. When and how is dismissal applied at LAUL?
10. How is turnover manifested at LAUL?
11. What are the objectives and forms of staff appraisal at LAUL?
12. How is appraisal measured at LAUL?
13. Is there an intention to change the appraisal scheme at LAUL?
14. What are the channels of communication at LAUL?
15. What are the oral methods of communication used at LAUL?

16. What are the written methods of communication used at LAUL?
17. What are the written methods of communication missing at LAUL, and why?
18. Is training applied at LAUL? If not why?
19. Are your staff members motivated?
20. If not how do you motivate them?

**B. With the staff members of LAUL**

1. Describe briefly your job?
2. What academic qualifications do you have?
3. How were you recruited?
4. Were you subject to any test or probation period during recruitment?
5. At what time of the year the appraisal process takes places?
6. How do you rate the communication system at LAUL:
  - (a) Within the department.
  - (b) Between different departments
  - (c) Between specific department and the librarian.
7. What are the written methods of communication used at LAUL?
8. What are the oral methods of communication used at LAUL? What is the percentage of each.
9. What are the channels of communication at LAUL? And how are they used?
10. Is grapevine a significant means of communication at LAUL?
11. Do you resort to grapevine as a means of communication?

12. Have you been trained at LAUL?

(a) If 'yes' when?

(b) If 'no' why?

13. Are you motivated during work at LAUL?

14. How do you evaluate the efficiency of the student assistants?

**C. With the student assistants at LAUL:**

1. How many hours do you work per week?

2. How much are you paid per hour?

3. Have you worked anywhere other than the library?

4. What is your major?

5. Did you benefit from your work in the library?

6. Do you want to study Library and Information science after working in the library?



April 11, 1995

Proposal for New Positions

Job Title : Assistant Librarian (acquisition)\*

Reports to : Librarian- Head of Technical Services

Supervises : Any acquisition assistant or student assistants performing acquisition task.

Primary Responsibilities:

- 1 - Verifies routine bibliographic and acquisitions information.
- 2 - Determines whether material is already in the collection or on order.
- 3 - Refers to supervisor those orders involving incomplete information, unusual costs or non-routine procedures.
- 4 - Checks orders for accuracy prior to sending.
- 5 - Codes order data entry according to academic depts'. codes.
- 6 - Orders LC cards for the books or LC nos. if not available.
- 7 - Monitors outstanding order files at regular intervals for items overdue and claims same.
- 8 - Checks materials received against invoices.
- 9 - Checks invoices for mathematical errors
- 10- Verifies invoices and sends to librarian for approval. Routes approved invoices to accounting unit for payment.
- 11- Maintains records of materials purchased by account number cost.
- 12- Prepares budget summaries showing materials expenditures and balances on a simple accounting system.

\* This job is actually done, though the incumbent has no job title or job description..

**APPENDIX III**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY**

Beirut, Lebanon

**EVALUATION OF NON-ACADEMIC PERSONNEL**

1994 - 1995

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_ **DIVISION / OFFICE** \_\_\_\_\_

**POSITION** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE ASSIGNED TO POSITION** \_\_\_\_\_

**RATINGS** : 1 : Outstanding; 2 : Very good; 3 : Adequate; 4 : Below standard; 5 : Poor; NA : Not applicable  
**ENTER IN THE COLUMN BELOW THE RATING WHICH MOST NEARLY DESCRIBES THE STAFF MEMBER'S PERFORMANCE**

	<b>RATING</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>1. KNOWLEDGE OF WORK :</b> Familiarity with own job, methods and procedures.		
<b>2. QUALITY OF WORK :</b> Thoroughness, accuracy and neatness in work.		
<b>3. QUANTITY OF WORK :</b> Output of satisfactory work.		
<b>4. INITIATIVE :</b> Interest in improving the job; seeking additional work and responsibility.		
<b>5. DEPENDABILITY:</b> Reliability in fulfilling job obligations.		
<b>6. COOPERATION :</b> Courteous, helpful attitude and compliance with rules & orders.		
<b>7. WORK HABITS :</b> Observation of office regulations & procedures, attendance & punctuality.		
<b>8. PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION :</b> Ability to plan & organize work to achieve maximum efficiency.		
<b>9. JUDGEMENT :</b> Ability to make decisions and offer opinions.		
<b>10. LEADERSHIP :</b> Ability to direct and develop subordinates.		

**OVERALL EVALUATION :** \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATIONS :**  
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 Supervisor's Signature

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 Date