

REFERENCE POINT

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Decide to Lead

“And God blesseth them, and God saith to them, ‘Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it, and rule over fish of the sea, and over fowl of the heavens, and over every living thing that is creeping upon the earth.’”
(Genesis 1:28 YLT)

In the beginning God blesses His creation. The blessing provides important guidance of how to work. The part of the blessing that stands out to me is the call to subdue the earth. As I reflect on this, my understanding of managing the earth includes the work of libraries and information centers.

As I have worked in different libraries, I do not think I am alone in seeing that sometimes there are projects or areas that could be improved, yet the tasks were not directly connected to the position description of any individual on staff. What is to be done about work that has not been assigned? I feel that we can decide to lead.

I see leading as something anyone can do through bringing about improvements by initiating new projects. I think when we connect with that early blessing mentioned in scripture, that our actions can inspire others to also seek opportunities for improving the spaces in which we all work. We are leading new changes.

By roaming the stacks or conversing with student employees, we can see if there are any areas that could be improved. Does the library need new signage? Has the library portal been reviewed for accessibility considerations? Do written policies need an update? We all have our tasks that we complete each day, but there is a certain level of excitement of working on new projects that we initiate.

Small projects can be quickly accomplished, which is encouraging; we are blessed on a job well done, which helps the library become even better. Complex projects can be overwhelming, but there can be confidence gained from making some progress. That initial start can help provide a clearer picture of what the overall project requires. For example, completing an inventory of the entire collection is complex and is avoided in some libraries, but “subduing” one section of the collection can create a workable model for the other sections.

Leading can be as simple as how we choose our office supplies such as changing from unsustainable foam plates to paper plates for office parties. Leading can involve creativity, such as creating a history of the library page for the library portal. Leading can involve offering suggestions to make meetings a little more productive, essentially more fruitful. We do not need to be an administrator to lead. I encourage you to start on a draft, share with your supervisor, and encourage communication with your co-workers. Every blessing in scripture is important and by leading we can connect with that first blessing. There is a certain joy from being a part of positive change and seeing progress from that change. Decide to lead and be blessed in the process.



—Adam Solomon

Adam has many years of experience in different areas of libraries and archives. He is currently looking for new areas to lead. He has been an ACL member for 2 years.