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The chief learning officer: A model role for integrating HR and strategic planning functions in libraries

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to put forward the position of chief learning officer (CLO) as a potential new role or models for new roles in libraries wishing to integrate human resources, strategic planning, and budgeting. Design/methodology/approach – The paper reviews the history and present functions of the CLO role in the corporate world, correlating work within the library field with key aspects of the position as way by which to conceptualize the integration of disparate library operations.

Findings – The position of CLO has not yet entered the library and information science (LIS) discourse.

Practical implications – Libraries that do not have CLO-like positions in their organizations may benefit from adopting or adapting the position to their libraries.

Originality/value – The paper introduces the CLO position to the field of LIS.

Keywords – Professional development, Budgeting, Strategic planning, Human resource development, Learning organizations, Chief learning officers

Paper type – Conceptual paper

Since the mid-1990s, the corporate world has gradually seen the emergence and establishment of a new professional position called the "chief learning officer (CLO)," also referred to at times as the "chief talent officer". These "C-level" or "C-suite" professionals, whose rank and status place them on par with chief information officers, chief operating officers, and so forth, focus on strategically identifying and managing the professional development and learning needs of a company's employees in order to maximize employee retention and productivity. They also seek to anticipate and facilitate adaptation to changes in the business landscape a company may face. CLOs keep companies apprised of emerging trends, threats, and innovations to which employees will eventually need to respond. They also identify needs for new positions within corporations, work both to recruit and develop existing talent within organizations, and quickly bridge skill gaps identified in new hires, connecting the silos that characterize traditional human resources (HR) operations (Bonner and Wagner, 2002; Sugrue and Lynch, 2006; Elkeles et al., 2017).

The position of CLO evolved out of the "human resource development" (HRD) functions traditionally seen as one of the many components of HR departments. As corporations have become more aware of the value of employees and cognizant of the missed opportunities and costs associated with employees possessing outmoded skills, HRD operations have expanded to the point of becoming autonomous operations in their own right, whose managers, the CLOs, now play an important role as members of their organizations "Top Management Teams" (TMT) to provide "strategic HRD" (SHRD) aligned with an organization's business goals and strategies (Douglas, 2015). In addition to a relatively new trade publication for the profession (CLO) there is also a growing body of literature on CLO's, including a recent doctoral dissertation that provides a cogent introduction to the position, its history, and function (Douglas, 2015). In 2006, the University of Pennsylvania established the first CLO doctoral program further legitimating and institutionalizing the role (Speizer, 2006).

While libraries and library organizations have, like many organizations, recognized the need for professional development and organizational learning and have put in place excellent learning programs and other components characteristic of HRD programs, it is only within the past decade that calls have been made to adopt SHRD (Smith, 2003, 2004; Hawthorne, 2004). Crumpton's (2015) recent book on strategic human resource planning within academic libraries makes the most thorough case for adopting SHRD to date.

This paper will therefore not argue again for the importance of SHRD, but will rather put forward the CLO as a potential new role in libraries that might help managers integrate the various aspects of SHRD within or under one position. To do this, a critical review of LIS literature related to SHRD and organizational learning will be undertaken using the CLO position as a lens by which to organize it.

After providing an overview of the nature of the CLO role and the characteristics of learning organizations, we will then paint a picture of what a CLO style role in libraries might offer with reference to the SHRD-related literature. The paper will conclude by considering areas for further research that might advance the CLO role within the field and consider how libraries might use the CLO model even if the creation of such a position is not possible whether due to lack of resources or managerial will.

The CLO: a brief history

The concept of the CLO has its origins in the early 1990s in the work of Verna Willis, an American systems theory scholar whose background in education and curriculum design shaped a career that blended experience derived from both the corporate and academic worlds (Short, 2012). Willis recognized that corporations were under increasing pressure at that time to become "learning organizations," a concept that also came to prominence in the late 1980s and early 1990s with the publication of Peter Senge's (1990, 2006) book *The Fifth Discipline*. Senge defined the learning organization as one "where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together" (Senge, 1990 in Garvin, 1993). David A. Garvin concretized the concept in another popular definition arguing that "a learning organization is an organization skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge

and insights," noting that "without accompanying changes in the way that work gets done, only the potential for improvement exists" (Garvin, 1993).

Willis' experience in corporate America made it clear to her that there were structural deficiencies and biases within organizations that relegated employee learning to a secondary role or afterthought. Where training programs existed, HR departments often sought to hire consultants who were little more than "feel good" "public speakers" who had little impact on organizational change and adaptation. She therefore conceptualized the role of "CLO" to increase the "position power" of those charged with managing organizational learning so that they might create real learning opportunities for employees that would improve corporate performance (Short, 2012). Once "organizational learning [...] [is] viewed as an organizational of life or death situation" by management, Willis argued in her groundbreaking article on the CLO, the learning needs of the organization will of necessity make the CLO's "perspectives" as important – and possibly more important – to the direction of a company as any other executive (Willis, 1991). As Willis (1991) notes, "learning and power sharing are the linchpins of organizational effectiveness."

At the time of her initial work in 1991, she could safely say that "organizations appear to be a long way from making systemic commitments to learning or to institutionalizing the learning function" and that "the idea of creating a chief learning officer (CLO) can be presumed a rarity if it exists at all" (Willis, 1991). At the time, there was only one position in the USA designated as CLO, a position at General Electric held by Steve Kerr (Sugrue and Lynch, 2006). By the mid-1990s and early 2000s, this was no longer true (Ward, 1996; Baldwin and Danielson, 2000). What we might call the "first generation" of CLOs made clear that their role was "organizational in scope and dealt more with issues of change and business performance rather than in the more traditional domains of course and curriculum design" (Baldwin and Danielson, 2000). Companies and even entire governments are seeing employee learning in the context of the "life or death situation" Willis had foreseen, as evidenced in a recent special report from *The Economist* (2017). As that paper notes, corporate sponsored employee training programs have become more strategically integrated into operations and resourced as companies decide that "it is better to train [existing employees]" even if they eventually "leave than not to train and have them stay" (*The Economist*, 2017).

The CLO's role

As Elkeles et al. (2017) note in the second edition of their seminal text on the CLO position, organizations are under increasing pressure "to be as effective and efficient as possible in achieving their outcomes." "Today's CLOs," they write, "often take responsibility for all development and effectiveness functions including recruitment, training, succession planning, retention, and enterprise-wide process improvement" with a continuous aim of "adding value" to the organization (2017). What follows will unpack these aspects of the CLO function with special reference to relevant articles from the LIS literature, starting with "process improvement," in order to lay out the CLO role as coordinator of these aspects and to provide an overview of where our field has touched on them.

Enterprise-wide process improvement

While the totality of the CLO's responsibilities positions her as an effective participant in C-level corporate decision making, the CLO's effectiveness in such participation rests in her ability to anticipate and address problems that can be solved through learning and other forms of process or performance improvement. Learning programs must thereby be aligned with the strategic goals of the organization and the organization's needs in light of meeting those goals (Elkeles et al., 2017).

The CLO must first have a firm grasp of the organization's strategic plan and "translate that strategy into talent requirements" and "on-the-job performance gaps, both current and future, that impact business results" (Elkeles et al., 2017). From that point, the CLO back designs his or her own strategic solution to the identified problems along with a "measurement strategy" that can be implemented after the learning or performance improvement solutions are completed (Elkeles et al., 2017).

Such an undertaking requires significant buy-in from senior management, of which the CLO is ideally a part, as well as the empowerment of the CLO and whatever monetary investment is required to achieve the learning. Moreover, the CLO must have a strong understanding of the various learning modalities available to the organization and may have to create or seek out the delivery of new ones to meet the organization's learning or improvement needs. This combination of empowerment, investment and delivery should yield a measurable return on investment either in the form of "profit increases or in cost savings" (Elkeles et al., 2017).

While many calls have been made for libraries to engage in organizational development processes (Phipps, 1993; Hawthorne, 2004; Smith, 2003, 2004; Stephens and Russell, 2004; Sullivan, 2004), few libraries have formalized the process to the degree seen at the University of Maryland libraries (Lowry, 2005), where four full time and four part time staff (out of a total of 300) were, at the time, engaged in organizational development work. More common are one-off, nitiative-based approaches aimed at gathering data for developing the organization without the support of dedicated staff, such as that described by librarians at the University of California Berkeley (Loo and Dupuis, 2015), or assessment activities undertaken by an employee responsible for assessment who reports results back to management (Emmons and Oakleaf, 2016). In the latter situation, assessment efforts may not tie back into budget-supported SHRD, but may simply serve as information given to those units assessed, which must then attempt to create needed change as best as they can. Perhaps most common are libraries that do not have a systematic measurement process in place across units or an assessment coordinator or team, let alone an executive-level manager coordinating assessment, planning, budgeting, and learning. In a survey of ARL member libraries in the USA, only "20% [...] link assessment and planning" (Bowlby, 2012).

Retention

Elkeles et al. (2017) note that "organizations investing only the minimum amount in learning and development will have high turnover" and that "when talent leaves, the costs are high." The sunk costs associated with the employee who leaves the organization – everything from recruitment, HR processing, training and whatever other investments have been made in the employee up to the point of separation – are reincurred when the employee is replaced by a new hire. Under austerity conditions during challenging economic times, a line lost within an organization may

not be replaced either in the short or long term, but may rather be left unfilled or cut altogether. While such situations can, at times, lead to newfound efficiencies, the cost of staff attrition and shrinkage may lead to "brain drain" or other unforeseen negatives such as decreased morale when remaining employees are left to pick up the slack.

CLOs are thus often given "the primary responsibility for the [organization's] talent management system" (Elkeles et al., 2017) which should be aimed at retaining talent by "planning for [needed] talent," "acquiring" the best talent, "developing" new and existing talent, and "managing" talent. To do this, the CLO must strategically coordinate traditional HR functions, such as recruitment and onboarding, with knowledge management functions centered around documenting employee skills and abilities, development functions centered around learning needs, and managerial functions centered around performance improvement, compensation and rewards, all in the service of retaining and maximizing the contribution of the organization's employees (Elkeles et al., 2017).

As Islam et al.'s (2014) survey of KM practices in academic libraries has shown, few academic libraries are actively engaged in knowledge management. While libraries are generally open to the idea of undertaking more active knowledge management practices, those surveyed in their study indicated a "bottleneck" in obtaining support and investment from senior management to implement KM program (Islam et al., 2014). While there are libraries actively engaged in strategically integrated internal knowledge management processes (Balagué et al., 2015, 2016), it is clear that most libraries have not adopted such processes. Relatively recent studies indicate that, at least in academic libraries, there is an overall lack of attention to retention in general (Strothmann and Ohler, 2011) and to specific programs that might aid in retention (Harrington and Marshall, 2014). Without CLO-like oversight of retention initiatives, libraries will continue to face the challenges associated with engaging and retaining employees common to all organizations including libraries (Markgren et al., 2007; Deloitte, 2016).

Training and succession planning

Coordinating the strategic training and development of employees is perhaps the core of what constitutes the CLO's role within an organization. But "managing the learning function" of an organization is more than just providing employees with or helping them to find professional development opportunities. It consists in working at the senior management level to develop an appropriate budget for organizational learning that maximizes return on investment; "monitoring and controlling [those] costs for maximum effectiveness and efficiency;" measuring the effectiveness and impact of learning (assessment); in-sourcing and outsourcing learning through effectively "managing vendors and suppliers as partners for the learning and development team;" and "ensuring that the right staff members are selected and motivating and rewarding them to achieve the exceptional performance" learning should afford (Elkeles et al., 2017). In other words, the CLO must be empowered within the organization to integrate what are often siloed functions when they function at all in libraries (Echols, 2016).

While some aspects of training must be undertaken tactically to respond to emerging trends and technologies or other exigencies an organization may face, succession planning can be understood as an aspect of training focused on the long-term development of employees within the organization. Succession planning "is preparation for the next job" an employee may need or

want to take within the organization (Elkeles et al., 2017). As Elkeles et al. (2017) note, "today's employees are interested in all types of career movement and development opportunities." The CLO must help prepare the organization for the inevitable transitions that occur when talent is lost for whatever reason. This function relies upon the knowledge management functions noted above needed to identify and "foster [...] [the] development" of "high potential" employees and increase "talent mobility" to facilitate employee engagement (Elkeles et al., 2017).

As with other areas of the CLO function, few libraries have taken the strategic approach to learning outlined by Saarti and Juntunen (2011). Rather, we might argue that the field has broadly taken a "competency" based approach to professional development (Smith et al., 2013; Harhai and Krueger, 2016). While such approaches may provide administrators with a clear set of learning objectives and a clear path for measuring outcomes, it falls short of the strategic work a CLO brings to learning, particularly the CLO's task of translating situationally and temporally specific business goals into the learning objectives needed to meet them by staff members in various stages of development. By falling into what Baldwin and Danielson (2000) call the "competency trap," organizations are often led to "translate complex strategic issues [...] into an overly general and simplistic list of competencies" resulting in "a fragmented set of learning initiatives" rather than strategic learning aligned to needs. Correlate with such competency-based thinking, one finds management engaging in succession planning by sending staff to workshops focused on developing generic qualities of "leadership" (Merrill and Lindsay, 2009; Brewerton, 2010; Texas Library Association, 2016), rather than undertaking the complex work of identifying the unique talents of employees and their learning needs for the purposes of developing those employees for future library-specific roles.

More commonly, however, professional development is "still nobody's baby" in many libraries, leaving librarians to take on individual responsibility for identifying and pursuing their own learning (Varlejs, 2009). Individuals are left to their own devices to attend conferences, sometimes with financial or other forms of support, engage in internally organized workshops or learning communities, or participate in "professional development days" provided by management (Merrill and Lindsay, 2009; Smith, 2011; Martin et al., 2015). Martin et al.'s (2015) IFLA paper reviewing best practices in professional development tellingly makes no mention of managerial-level strategic thinking in planning for organizational learning. While there is no question that self-directed learning can be very effective (Lovelace, 2010; Stephens, 2015; Wolfe, 2016), participation in such learning remains contingent upon librarians' abilities to take time away from the library, which may be inhibited by their workload, a supervisor's disinterest or hostility to an employee being away from the library altogether, travel budgets, and/or the librarian's own attitudes toward learning.

Ineffective management of the organization's learning function and poor succession planning can lead to a host of negative consequences for the organization, not least of which is the disengagement and boredom that comes with plateauing (Ugah, 2008; Munch, 2013; Friedman, 2014) and the "skills gap" that arises when employees are no longer able to meet the demands of the changing nature of work. Such workers have in recent years been labeled "legacy employees," a term that once and still at times refers to holdovers from one company after two companies merge, but which more often is used to refer to employees whose skills and competencies have become unaligned over time with "the desired direction of the organization," employees for whom the "reasons they were originally hired may place them at odds with the

long term future direction of the organization" (Rothwell, 2016). As Rothwell (2016) notes, if such misalignment "only happen[s] a few times, there [will] be no problem." "But if it happens over a long span of time," something not unlikely given that "few organizations have comprehensive workforce planning in which leaders periodically compare the total mix of competencies of the organization to its strategic objectives to ensure alignment" – a task which would fall to a CLO in organizations where there is one – "there is an increasing mismatch between the existing collective competencies of the workforce and what is needed to achieve strategic objectives," a potentially "disastrous" situation for the organization.

But it is not just those currently employed by an organization who are the focus of the CLO's efforts. New employees and those who belong to emerging generations may come into an organization with skill sets that do not completely align with the organization's culture or needs (Tulgan, 2015). Library and information science (LIS) graduate programs may not be providing emerging professionals with all of the skills they need (Chow et al., 2011; Saunders, 2015). In any event, "regardless of the level of talent, a certain amount of preparation for the job is necessary" once an employee is hired, which in some cases may be "significant," requiring training in unique, job-specific skills or technologies or more moderate, requiring basic guidance in adjusting to new practices (Elkeles et al., 2017). Unfortunately, as Saunders (2015) notes, "very few [library] employers offer any on-the-job training for new hires."

Recruitment

Traditionally, the "three critical talent actions – recruit, develop and retain – have operated in corporate silos," argues Michael E. Echols (2016) in a recent column in *Chief Learning Officer* magazine. In today's learning organizations, the CLO seeks to link and coordinate these functions to attract and then retain top talent, both externally and internally.

By virtue of their insight into the current state of an organization's readiness to meet new challenges in the marketplace, CLOs are uniquely positioned to help inform those engaged in locating, attracting, evaluating, and ultimately hiring new employees (Elkeles et al., 2017). Echoing Echols (2016), Elkeles et al. (2017) note that these traditional HR functions are often "disconnected" and must be integrated into the "talent management system" noted above.

Equally importantly, the CLO assists in creating a workplace that will attract potential employees. Today's employees are looking for "development, coaching, and meaningful work in a company with a transparent culture" (Galagan, 2014), the same organizational characteristics that also feed into retention. A robust corporate culture that affords career opportunities has been correlated with "best company to work for" awards, such as those conferred by Fortune magazine (Averbook, 2005), and by employees through websites such as Glassdoor, a major US jobs and recruiting site (Baldwin, 2016). Today's employees expect professional development opportunities leading to greater leadership roles in their organizations and will look for them elsewhere if they do not find them with their current employers (Gale, 2016; Galagan, 2014). Many younger professionals in particular may expect the kind of on-demand learning through mobile devices they use in their everyday lives (Gale, 2015). A recent survey by Glassdoor shows that "career advancement opportunities" are valued by a majority of all potential employees with "3 out of 5" of those seeking employment at the time of their survey reporting it as "among their top considerations when deciding where to take a job" (Gale, 2015). The basis

for an attractive work culture might in no small part be attributed to the existence of an integrated talent management system.

Creating such conditions for employee recruitment is also good for an organization's bottom line. A recent economic analysis conducted by Glassdoor (Chamberlain, 2015) found that those companies determined to be "best places to work" in their analysis of employee reviews of workplaces and other data financially outperform a general stock index (S&P 500), a phenomenon first noted in Heskett and Kotter's "iconic stud[y]" *Corporate Culture and Performance*, which found that organizations with "performance-enhancing cultures" financially outperform "average non-performance-based firm[s]" in remarkable ways (Baldwin, 2016).

In many libraries, HR departments have little to do with the recruitment and hiring of librarians beyond placing advertisements and coordinating interview schedules. Librarians themselves often write descriptions for new positions and comprise search committees. They may or may not have a synoptic sense of the current needs of the organizations nor the ability to recognize talents in applicants that may fill niches not yet fully perceived as needed. Bugg (2015) has made a strong case for libraries to rethink their approaches to recruiting and has argued that HR managers and library directors should work more closely in recruiting efforts at every level of the process. A CLO or CLO-like employee in a library organization could contribute to developing more strategic search processes in this area and could be seen as a valuable asset to the hiring process itself, whether that means working with staff and senior management to identify and draft new positions and job descriptions or serving on or working closely with a hiring committee to inform the members of that team about important talent needs facing the organization beyond what's in the job posting.

Finally, CLOs are also positioned well to build pipelines between organizations and schools to create ideal talent pools from which to recruit (Maxey, 2016). The CLO's closeness to the day to day learning needs of employees and involvement in executive-level strategic planning allows her to effectively communicate the organization's present and future talent needs to the educational community as well as to help design with that community new programs of study or curriculum, potentially fulfilling Bugg's (2015) call for library organizations to build "talent communities" from which to draw.

Concluding comments: advancing the CLO role in the library organization

Libraries and library systems have not, for the most part, taken the systemic approaches to learning that many other kinds of organizations have. Coordinated and directed organizational development characteristic of the University of Maryland in the mid-2000s (Lowry, 2005) or of some of the European and Finnish organizations described in Balagué and Saarti et al.'s work (Balagué et al., 2015, 2016; Balagué and Saarti, 2011; Saarti and Juntunen, 2011) remain the exception rather than the rule. Despite the heroic efforts of Australian librarian (now organizational consultant) Ian W. Smith, whose columns, articles (many of which appeared in this journal) and work through IFLA's Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning Committee did much in the early 2000s to highlight the need for SHRD, such strategic thinking is still strikingly absent from most library organizations. SHRD as a concept, let alone an executive-level professional dedicated to implementing it, seems to be underutilized in the profession, which we can infer from the very few citations within the LIS literature as

documented by Google Scholar as of March 2017. IFLA's important 2005 publication *Continuing Professional Development – Preparing for New Roles in Libraries* (Genoni and Walton, 2005) had been cited no more than six times. While Crumpton's (2015) book on strategic HR management is too recent to have had much impact (only two citations in Google Scholar), Hawthorne's (2004) important article on the topic has had only 15 citations since its publication, and of those only a few explore the same vein. Smith's (2003) article on the strategic importance of HRD fares better with 26 citations, but again only a few of the articles citing him build on his work in any productive way. What, then, can we do as a field to advance SHRD practices in libraries beyond the literature?

First, it is hoped that the model of the CLO position offered in this paper will provide a means by which library managers can conceptualize the creation of a new formal position within their libraries, whether that position is filled by one person or distributed over a team. Just as the role of the "Scholarly Communications Librarian" has helped organize and integrate a set of practices of growing importance to libraries under a unified title (Morrison, 2009; Del Toro et al., 2011; Gilman and Ramirez, 2012), so too might the "CLO" serve a similar function. Again, there is no shortage of initiatives in libraries related to organizational learning, strategic HR management, and other areas a where a CLO might offer strategic stewardship. Where possible, library managers might consider renaming and thereby reconceptualizing these positions.

Second, we might productively study emerging SHRD-related positions within the field in light of the CLO role. For example, the University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB) and the University of Houston (UH) have both created positions focused on organizational development. UCSB has both a deputy university librarian for organizational development and effectiveness (University of California Los Angeles, 2012) and a learning organization librarian (University of California at Santa Barbara, 2017c), the latter position created in 2013. These two positions seem to be the core of the university's HR department (University of California at Santa Barbara, 2017b), with the deputy university librarian reporting to the university librarian (University of California at Santa Barbara (UCSB), 2017d). A recent conference presentation by the current holder of the of the organizational learning librarian position makes it clear that the position is focused on managing the library's professional development budget and programming along with implementing a knowledge management system (Driscoll, 2014). However, both the position descriptions and the organization chart make it appear that both of these positions are engaged with many of the traditional functions of HR department and possibly less engaged with the strategic aspects of assessment and planning characteristic of the CLO. The library's relatively sparse set of "Assessment" documents and the absence of organizational learning in its "Strategic Roadmap" and most recent annual report reinforce this perception, which of course may not reflect the totality of the complexities of the work being done by the unit (University of California at Santa Barbara, 2017a). However, the positions are well positioned within the organization with the deputy university librarian for organizational development and effectiveness clearly included in the TMT (UCSB, 2017d).

Similarly, the UH has created a role along the lines of the UCSB learning organization librarian position (a search to fill the position taking was place at the time of this writing). Called the "Director of recruitment and organizational learning", this position, too, includes many of the areas of traditional HR operations as well (University of Houston, 2017a). Unlike the UCSB position, the UH position reports to an associate dean for Resource Management who oversees

everything from assessment and statistics to the library discovery systems (University of Houston (UH), 2017b). While the creation of a position that combines both recruitment and learning provides an opportunity to engage in some of the practices characteristic of the CLO function, its relative lack of empowerment within the organization, at least as indicated by the institution's organizational chart, leads one to conclude that HRD rather than SHRD will be the most likely focus for the organization (UH, 2017b).

What aspects of SHRD are successfully integrated by these positions as compared to a hypothetical CLO role? What aspects are not? How do employees perceive the efficacy and value of these positions? How do the holders of the positions perceive their own power and efficacy? Research into such questions using the CLO position as a lens or foil may help reveal existing successful practices that have not yet been named and possible gaps in organizational structures.

Third, library managers can create CLO or CLO-like positions in their libraries. However, given the budgetary constraints and austerity conditions library systems across the globe have been facing, certainly since the "Great Recession" of 2008 and in some cases prior, it may be challenging for some libraries to create HR positions of the sort seen at the two universities just mentioned, let alone true CLO or CLO-like positions. Where such CLO positions can be created, it may prove advantageous to do so. Yet whether the position is formally created or assigned within the library, adapted to a library system's existing HR office (if one exists), or simply used as a heuristic by which to reconceive the roles of existing employees, libraries will only gain by integrating the activities that help shepherd employees over time through the changing landscapes of their workplaces and equip them for the new demands those landscapes will make. The functions of the CLO position may serve as a productive template for team-based approaches to integrating internal HR functions with assessment, knowledge management, and learning (when such programs exist). Under any scenario, strong leadership from senior management and management's willingness to appropriately resource such efforts will be required for any approach to work.

Finally, in the absence of managerial support or resources, librarians in a variety of positions might seek to engage in the sort of cross-institutional research cited above (Balagué and Saarti, 2011; Saarti and Juntunen, 2011; Sparks et al., 2014; Balagué et al., 2015, 2016) as a means by which they as individual scholars might move their organizations to benchmark and thereby challenge themselves to develop, whether individually or through collaboration, better approaches to all aspects of the CLO function. Librarians may also advocate for their libraries to adopt guidelines or standards that push their institutions to consider ways to integrate what may be disparate HR and performance improvement functions such as IFLA's *Guidelines for Continuing Professional Development* (Varlejs, 2016), the UK's Customer Service Excellence Standard (Broady-Preston and Lobo, 2011), ISO 9001 (Balagué and Saarti, 2011), or other quality management standards. Bringing such standards and ideals into organizational culture may help to open a conversation around the need to break down silos and integrate functions and thereby create receptive conditions for the CLO model.

In conclusion, it should be mentioned that this paper has not taken up the question of whether it is wise to adapt corporate practices and values to libraries and will only nod to the importance of carefully considering and critiquing their use (Seale, 2013; Gardner and Halpern, 2016;

Drabinski and Walter, 2016). It might be suggested, however, that the embrace of SHRD in library organizations may yet follow only under pressures to "demonstrate value" (Strouse, 2003; Crumpton, 2015; Oakleaf, 2010). If library directors do not yet feel they are in a "life or death situation" in terms of adaptation to changing circumstances, particularly economic circumstances which they and their staff may wish to challenge in various spheres and on various fronts, these pressures may ultimately be the stimuli that lead us all to comprehensively address the CLO gap in our institutions' organizational structures.

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