reer action plan will help boost career development. Following the ten steps requires conscientious efforts and keeping on track. To recap:

1. Conduct a self-analysis.
2. Ask a colleague to review that self-analysis and to offer constructive criticism and advice.
3. Identify organizational expectations for career advancement.
4. Pursue additional education.
5. Keep up with the profession through its literature.
6. Participate in library, organizational, or local activities.
7. Pursue career development through effective use of a mentor, development of a network, and participation in professional organizations.
8. Develop an area or areas of expertise.
9. Research and write for publication.
10. Concentrate on attitude adjustment.

Successful completion of these ten steps will help an academic librarian realize the goals of a rewarding career in increasingly more responsible positions—or, if committed to a particular locale or library—it will lead to personal satisfaction. ■■

Staff retreats in ACRL libraries

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What types of libraries hold staff retreats, and why.

Libraries are changing. As part of the change process, they are becoming more participative, staff-centered organizations. They try to foster the adaptability, creativity, and development of their human resources to better serve their clients and to advance the profession. To achieve these goals, some administrators are incorporating managerial tools which have proven effective in other organizational development efforts. One such tool is a retreat which can be used, in addition to other purposes, to clarify new missions and goals, open communication channels, brainstorm and plan future programs and improve the skills of staff.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to determine:

a) whether academic libraries were holding, have held, or were planning to hold retreats as defined;
b) the nature of these retreats;
c) the usefulness of these retreats; and
d) whether libraries holding or likely to hold retreats had common characteristics.

Methodology

During the last ten years, no mention of retreats for library staff was found in the literature, although meetings were being held for similar purposes. They were called "workshops," "continuing education seminars," "staff development meetings," "institutes," "in-service training," etc. These activities had some components of a retreat as defined by the researchers, but not all.

A 35-item self-administered questionnaire was mailed to 192 college and university libraries selected from the membership list of the Association of College and Research Libraries. After non-academic libraries were excluded, every third li-

TABLE 1

Purposes of Retreats

	Essential	*Desirable*	*N/A*
Clarify organizational goals	13	2	0
Evaluate achievement of previous goals	8	3	4
Help assimilate new staff members	3	8	3
Provide work related continuing education	2	9	4
Improve overall communication	10	7	1
Help staff get acquainted	2	7	4
Improve organizational climate	10	6	0
Involve all employees in the change process	4	7	3
Improve interpersonal relations skills	7	8	0
Understand total organizational needs and constraints	10	4	0

Other: Team building; Establishing annual objectives; Strategic planning; Setting new goals; Developing strategies for problem solution.

brary on the list was selected, regardless of size. The response rate was 73.4% (141). All but three questionnaires were usable.

Findings

General. For the purpose of this study, we defined a retreat as "a meeting of one or more days, attended by a large number of library staff, held away from the library and with a portion of the activity generally falling outside of work hours." According to this definition, 18 libraries out of the 138 responding (138) held retreats. Of these, 9 were publicly and 9 were privately supported. Sixteen other (11.8%) respondents said they would likely hold retreats in the future. Of these, 13 were public and 3 were private institutions.

One hundred and one (73.7%) of the respondents, including those holding retreats, indicated that they provided other types of continuing education/staff development sessions/events for their staff. Ten libraries (7.8%) stated that they had held retreats in the past but had discontinued them. Reasons stated were: the expense could not be justified; there was a lack of need; and an opportunity had not presented itself. Similar reasons were given by libraries for not holding retreats. Staff being too few in number was an additional reason given by this group.

Of all the respondents, 30 (21.7%) stated that they planned to hold a retreat in the next two years.

Respondents were generous with ideas, cautions and successes rewarding retreats. On the negative side, retreats were judged as trendy, artificial, promising more than they deliver, too costly and time consuming. Positive comments noted their effectiveness for improving communication, sharing ideas and increasing participation. Positive comments outnumbered negative remarks.

The major reasons stated why libraries do not hold retreats are a) they are too costly; b) the size of the library staff is too small; and c) a need is not seen for them.

Most libraries which try the retreat approach to staff development continue holding them.

Analysis of data from libraries holding retreats. A third of those libraries holding retreats started them during the past six years. Of the eleven who responded to the question of frequency, seven held retreats annually.

Retreats were held more often for professionals than support staff. Support staff were involved about half as much as professionals. Some retreats (37.5%) were held for administrative staff (directors, associate/assistant directors, department heads) alone, while the same percentage (37.5%) were held for professional staff alone. No retreats were held for support staff alone.

Fall was the time of year most retreats were held (47.8%), followed by Spring (33.3%) and Summer (19.0%). None were held in the Winter. Seventy percent of the retreats were held between school sessions. Eighty-two percent of the retreats were held totally on institutional time. The range for length of retreats was from 1 to 3 days.

Responding institutions reported that 77.8% of their retreats were held on campus, usually within 30 miles of campus at places like ranches, conference centers, resorts, hotels, and university-owned facilities. On-campus (22.2%) retreats were held away from the library at faculty/staff clubs, chapels, lodges and assembly rooms in various buildings.

The institution usually (87.5%) paid the entire expenses for attendees. The rest of the time the expenses were shared between the participant and the institution. Two-thirds of the public-supported libraries used state funds to support retreats.

The impetus for holding retreats came from a variety of sources. It was generated by the library administration 33.3% of the time and by staff 20% of the time.

The most essential purposes of retreats were

TABLE 2

Data for Institutions Holding Retreats

Characteristics		*Number Responding*	*Percent Responding*
Governance:	Public Institution	9	50
	Private Institution	9	50
Professional Staff: (FTE)	1–10	5	28
	11–30	5	28
	31–50	1	6
	51–100	7	39
	101–200	0	0
Support Staff: (FTE)	1–20	5	28
	21–50	5	28
	51–100	1	6
	101–200	5	28
	210–300	2	11
Budget: (in dollars)	Under 100,000	1	6
	100,001–500,000	3	17
	500,001–1 million	2	11
	1,000,001–2 million	0	0
	2,000,001–3 million	4	22
	3,000,001–4 million	1	6
	Over 5 million	7	39
Population:	Under 25,000	2	11
	25,001–50,000	4	22
	50,001–100,000	4	22
	100,001–250,000	0	0
	250,001–500,000	2	11
	500,001–1 million	2	11
	1,000,001–2 million	1	6
	Over 2 million	3	17
Director in Position:	0–3 years	4	22
	3–10 years	8	44
	Over 10 years	6	33
Past Director:	0–3 years	4	22
	3–10 years	7	39
	Over 10 years	7	39
Outside Director:	Yes	13	72
	No	5	28

identified as:

1. Clarifying organizational goals;
2. Improving overall communication;
3. Improving organizational climate; and
4. Understanding total organizational needs and constraints (see Table 1).

Retreats were evaluated upon completion 88.2% of the time. Most (43.8%) were planned and organized by a combination of library administration and staff. Topics discussed at retreats were decided by library administrators 70.6% of the time. Topics discussed included long-range planning, goal setting and mission, evaluation of present programs, automation, improving communication, personnel matters, budget, organizational structure, moves, and administrative style.

The library's own staff (41.2%) provided most of the presenters at retreats, followed by university staff (20.8%), then personnel from other libraries, colleges and universities, and the private sector (39.2%).

Seventeen of the 18 libraries holding retreats stated that they would likely continue this practice.

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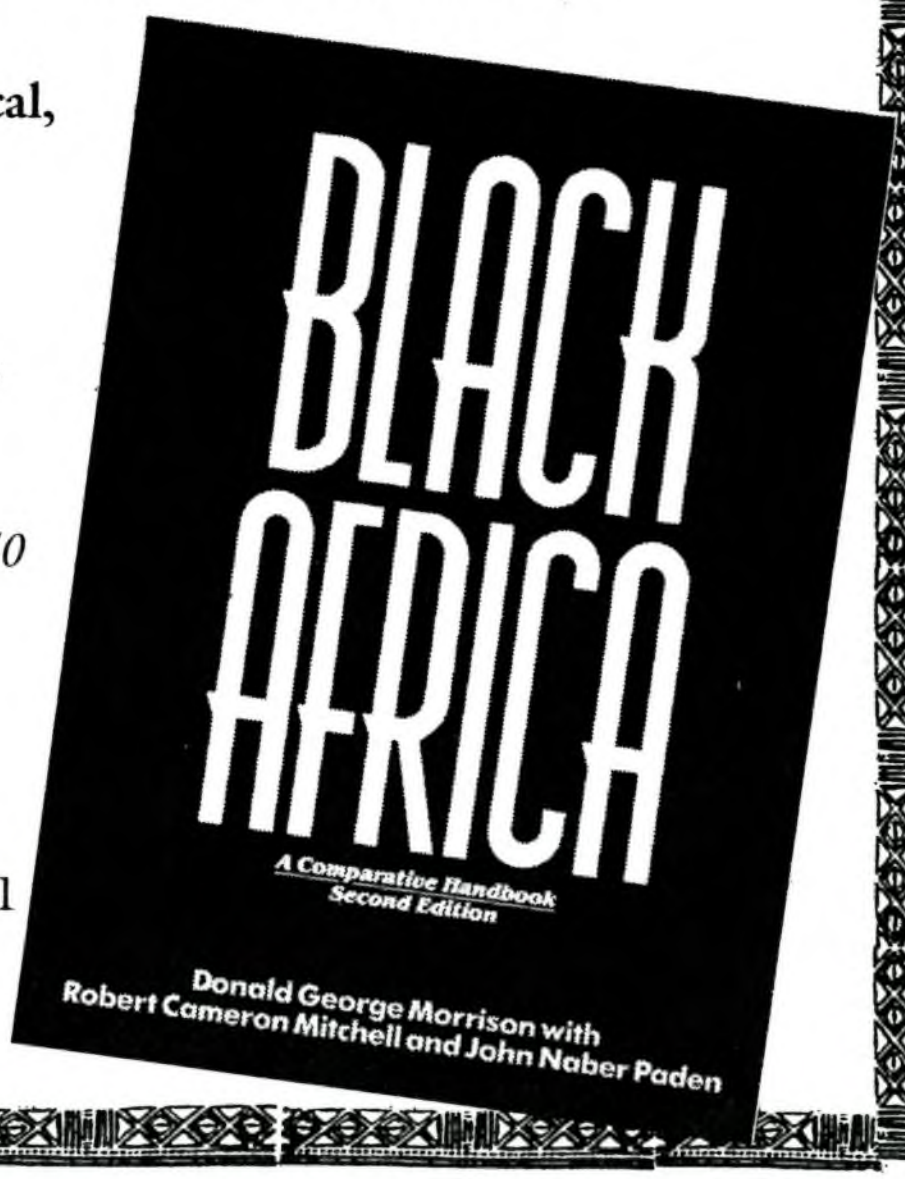

Conclusions

A number of general conclusions can be drawn from the data gathered:

Although work-related continuing education is a desirable component of retreats, the results of the study indicate that retreats are generally held to address overall organization concerns.

The fact that nearly 22% of respondents (includes institutions presently holding retreats) said they plan to hold a retreat in the next two years, may indicate a growing interest in holding retreats.

Institutional characteristics of libraries which hold retreats are shown in Table 2.

When combining the data of libraries holding and planning to hold retreats, the following common characteristics emerge:

1) Both privately and publicly supported college and university libraries are likely to hold retreats. Though a greater percentage of privately supported libraries held retreats, data indicate that more public institutions plan to hold retreats in the near future.

2) The larger the institution based on size of staff and budget, the more likely retreats will be found.

3) The larger the city population in which the library is located, the more likely the library will be involved in retreats.

4) A library which has had a director in position between 3–10 years will be more likely to have retreats than those with directors in position fewer than 3 and more than 10 years. Retreats are more likely to start at libraries which are directed by a person who came from the outside and whose previous director was in position over 10 years.

Recommendations

As a result of this study, several recommendations were made. Some deal with the study itself:

1) Research focusing on the other types of staff development/continuing education activities and programs presently held in ACRL libraries be conducted.

2) A follow-up article containing specific guidelines for holding retreats at libraries be written.

3) A follow-up study be accomplished to expand on the different purposes served by retreats and other continuing education/staff development activities.

4) A follow-up study be conducted to help ascertain the cost-effectiveness of retreats.

Other recommendations deal with retreats:

1) Libraries undergoing major organizational or philosophical change may find the retreat method a valuable approach to help the change process.

2) A relatively new director hired from outside the present organization may find retreats helpful in facilitating the transition.

3) Retreats appear helpful in clarifying organizational goals, improving overall communication and climate, and in helping employees understand total organizational needs and constraints.

4) Since the complexity of libraries increases with size of staff and budget, larger libraries may benefit from the retreat method as a staff and organizational development tool.

5) Libraries whose past directors had long tenures may find retreats helpful in assisting with the transition period.

■■

Have you seen your IPEDS?

For many years, as part of the Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS), the Department of Education has collected statistics on college and university libraries and produced tables of results. ACRL has occasionally published these results, most recently in *Library Statistics of Colleges and Universities, 1985: National Summaries, State Summaries, Institutional Tables* (ACRL, 1987).

HEGIS was not one survey but a set—some periodic, some annual—that gathered data on such topics as enrollment, degrees awarded, faculty, and finance. Forms went from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to the agency in each state responsible for coordinating higher education. What happened next varied from state to state, but the usual pattern was that the forms were mailed "To The President" on each campus for distribution to the appropriate respondent.

Several years ago it was decided that HEGIS should be expanded to include not only public and private institutions accredited to award degrees, but also institutions offering occupational education beyond the secondary school. Hence HEGIS became IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) and the number of institutions covered was increased from just over 3,000 to just over 12,000. A library survey is still part of the package and the procedures remain the same (i.e., distribution through state agencies). The 1988 IPEDS library survey will be sent to states in August and should reach campuses in the fall. **If you don't get a copy by the end of September, contact the person on your campus responsible for responding to government surveys.**

Academic librarians have criticized the NCES

for taking too long to publish results of the HEGIS library surveys. One reason for the delay was that librarians were very slow to return completed questionnaires. In 1985, when the last HEGIS library survey was in process, Robert Wedgeworth, then Executive Director of ALA, and JoAn Segal, ACRL Executive Director, co-signed a letter sent to all academic library directors urging response. A good number called ALA to say that they had never received a form! This experience made us resolve to alert academic librarians next time the library survey form went out. **If you don't get a copy by the end of September, contact the person on your campus responsible for responding to government surveys.**

Once you have the survey, please fill it in completely and return it promptly to the indicated address. The sooner forms are returned, the sooner results can be published. ACRL and the ALA Office for Research are working with the NCES to get results out fast. You can help by returning your survey form as soon as possible. We are also working with NCES to improve the questionnaire. Please let us know what you think of the 1988 form. ■■

INNOVATIONS

Faculty access to RLIN at New York University: RLG's research access project

By Melanie Dodson

Coordinator, Project Inform
Bobst Library, New York University

RLIN, the database of the Research Libraries Group, has entered the world of end user services through the Research Access Project (RAP), a pilot program involving eleven RLG institutions.

Initiated in early 1988, RAP provides faculty with RLIN searching accounts at a cost of $99 for a ten hour block of search time. Each participating institution has adopted its own approach to subsidies, training, and selection of faculty. But all will contribute evaluative information about the project through a questionnaire developed in conjunction with the Public Services Committee of RLG.

At New York University, we have set up over forty library-subsidized RLIN/RAP accounts thus far for faculty and research staff—the largest group of accounts to date among the RAP institutions. RAP's enthusiastic reception at NYU is partly due to Project Inform, an initiative through which librarians at NYU are examining ways and means to utilize and integrate information systems throughout the campus. As part of Project Inform, we have introduced faculty to many online databases, including RLIN. Through these demonstrations, faculty see firsthand RLIN's capabilities and, by extension, the benefits of the Research Access Project.

Initially, we identified departments with faculty most likely to use RLIN as a research tool—primarily in the arts, humanities, and social sciences. Reference librarians and bibliographers also suggested specific faculty who use RLIN in the Library or who are involved in ongoing bibliographic research projects. These faculty were sent a letter and brochure describing the database and equipment needed to access it. From this targeted mailing of 100, we received thirty-five requests for accounts from departments ranging from nursing to telecommunications and from cinema studies to Near Eastern languages. A month later, we distributed several more accounts following a general announcement in the Library's newsletter. While most accounts are for individual use, some are shared by faculty and graduate students within departments.

Librarians conducted training for participants during April and May. These one-hour sessions