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LIS 650

This week's readings really helped highlight the concepts of authority, power, accountability, and how they all relate. I have not yet had the opportunity to examine these concepts in the library field, but I still like to provide personal example from my own experiences because I can relate to some scenarios.

The most influential person I have worked for was a few years back in a manufacturing work environment. My manager at the time was new to managing, and we were the same age, but he had been with the company for 5+ years while I was a new employee. In this business, I learned that power and influence can be intimidating when your actions affect hundreds of people in a large organization. Over time, my manager had learned everything he could about the business and how different departments worked together to meet common goals. People frequently came to him for help with their problems, even though it wasn't part of his job requirements to help them. He always used his influence to constantly help others by listening to their problems to try and make their jobs easier and more efficient. In addition to having a thorough understanding of your business and operating environment, it is incredibly important to have the willingness and desire to help people. If I ever have the opportunity to manage others, I hope to use this same mentality and use the employee-manager experience as a model for how I hope to manage. Based on lessons I have learned from personal experiences, I would make a conscious effort to remember/do the following:

- In addition to learning and mastering your own department, learn about the other departments and how they work together as part of a larger organization. Learn how things are currently working, then evaluate to ask, "How can I make it better?"
- To be an effective leader/manager, you must understand what your subordinates do. I would even go as to say you should have experience doing the work they do.
- In a leadership position, keep in mind that accountability comes with the job. As a leader, you are responsible for not just your actions, but also the actions of others, whether they are good or bad. Everyone is accountable to someone else.

Evans & Greenwell (93) noted that oftentimes, people overlook the fact that once you gain power and authority, you are accountable for its use. I have worked for several businesses where the environments had a lot of power struggles. It seemed like the ones in power lost sight of the company's main mission because the most important thing for them was to be in charge. I am hoping to one day work in a library where hopefully, this is not the case.

Evans, G. E., & Greenwell, S. (2000). *Management basics for information professionals*. American Library Association.