

# The Beginner's Guide to Being in Charge



Suzanne Macaulay, OWWL Library System  
Indiana State Library, September 2022

# Suzanne Macaulay

Program Director, OWWL Library System

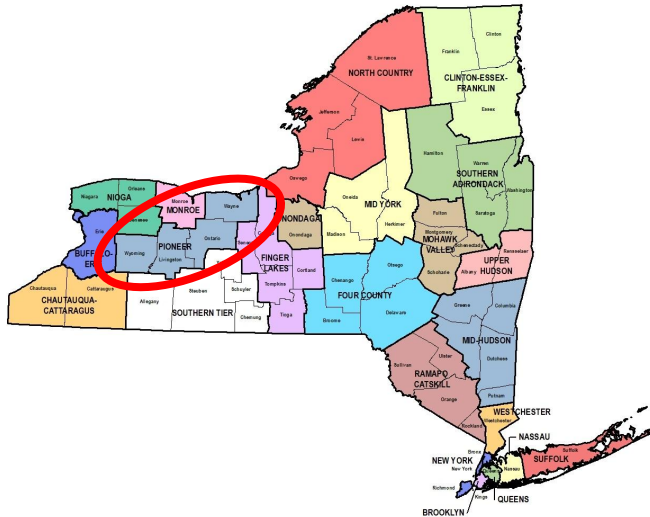
Things I do:

- ✓ Coordinated Outreach
- ✓ Youth Services Consultant
- ✓ State Aid for Library Construction
- ✓ Continuing Education
- ✓ Social Media & Communications
- ✓ Donut Purchasing

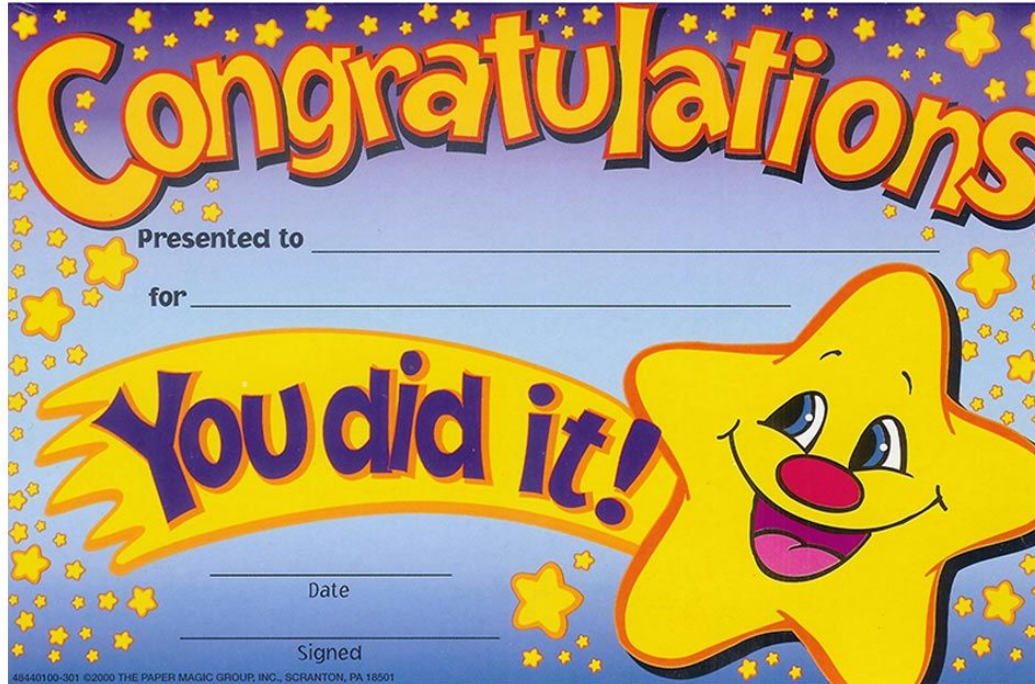


# OWWL Library System

- Headquartered in Canandaigua, New York
- Support library services in Ontario, Wayne, Wyoming, and Livingston Counties
- Includes 42 member libraries across 2500 square miles



Congratulations! You are a new  
Director/Manager/Supervisor/Leader/etc



# Now what?







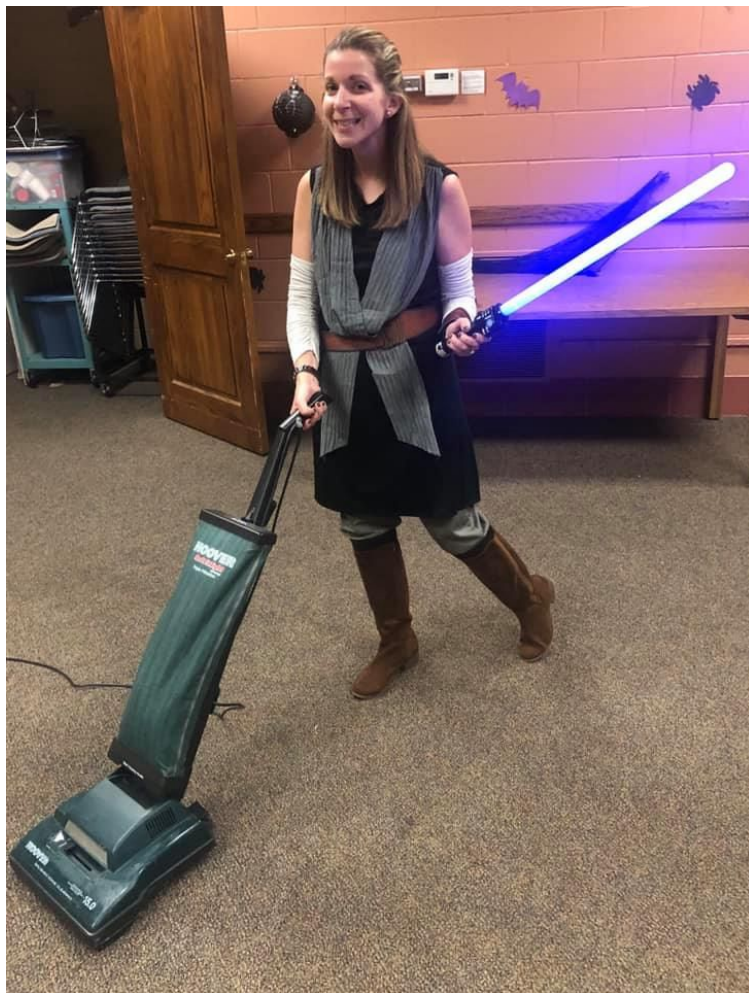
Suzanne Dlugolonski  
Macaulay



Nov 22, 2019 · 2

"What's it like being a Library Director?"







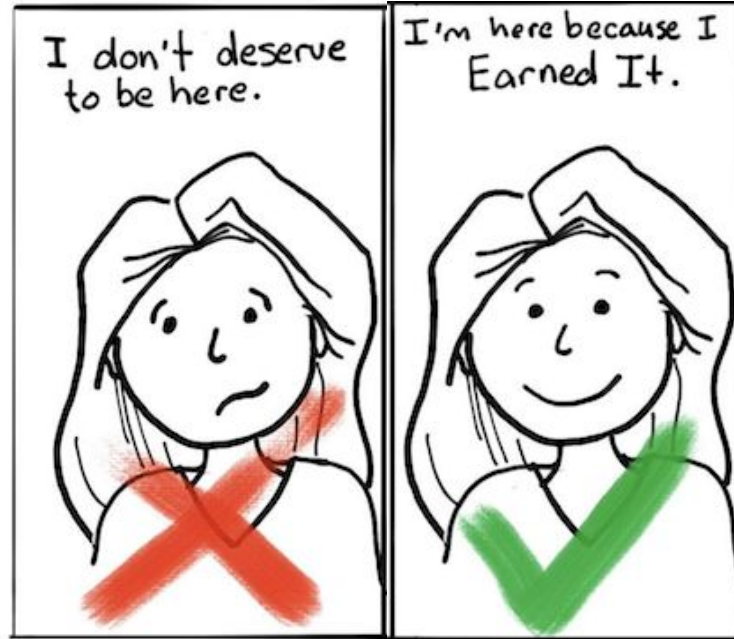






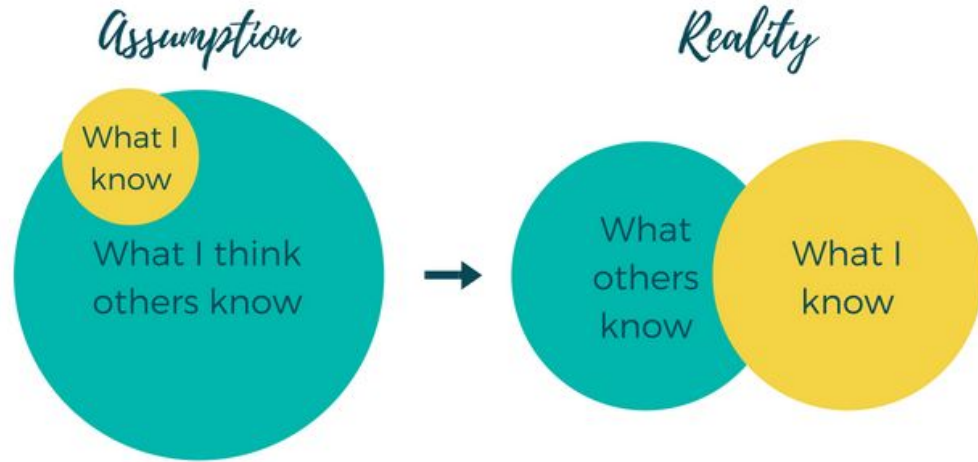
LESSONS  
LEARNED

# You Deserve Your Position



# Imposter Syndrome

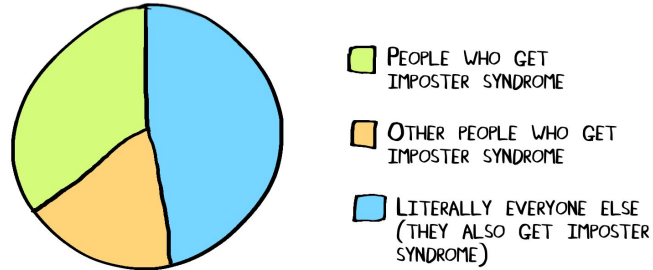
Imposter Syndrome: The idea that you've only succeeded due to luck, and not because of your talent or qualifications





# Imposter Syndrome

- It is common
- It is normal to have feelings of self-doubt
- It is especially common and normal to have feelings of self-doubt when starting a new job or position



EVERYONE FEELS LIKE AN IMPOSTER  
SOMETIMES, AND THAT'S OKAY

ERRANTSCIENCE.COM



“You won't like my idea and it makes you hate me. Then you fire me. Then I have to move back in with my parents and they'll be ashamed of me. Then everyone finds out back home and laughs at me until my face melts off.”



# Imposter Syndrome



**Tianna T. Bartoletta**   
@tibertoletta



Turns out it's not having doubts  
that's the problem. It's believing  
them.



# You Deserve To Be Adequately Compensated for Your Position



# You Deserve To Be Adequately Compensated for Your Position

- ✓ Do your research
- ✓ Demonstrate your value
- ✓ Do not be afraid

# Don't Go It Alone



# Don't Go It Alone

- Mentors
- Advisors
- Allies
- Network
- Sponsors



# Don't Go It Alone

**Mentors:** Share existing knowledge, skills, and experience



# Don't Go It Alone

**Advisors:** Offer specific advice about specific questions



# Don't Go It Alone

**Allies:** Makes sure colleagues are heard, included, supported, and encouraged



# Don't Go It Alone

**Sponsor:** The person who will advocate for you (even when you are not in the room)





# Don't Go It Alone

**Network:** Peers that provide emotional and practical help



# Use Your Seat at the Table

- ✓ Come prepared
- ✓ Be curious
- ✓ Be confident—**YOU** are the authority on your organization

# Use Your Seat at the Table

- Practice out loud
- Create space to speak  
Use the “Yes, ...plus/furthermore...” method
- Don't use clarifying language

- Just reaching out...
- Just a quick....
- Just wanted to ask...
- Just thinking out loud here...
- I'm no expert at this, but...
- I'm probably off base, but....
- I'm not 100% sure, but...
- Is/Isn't that right?
- Does that make sense?
- I hope that makes sense.
- I almost think we'd be better off by....
- Perhaps we might consider looking at...
- It would be great if you could find the time to look at...
- I'm sorry, I just wanted to ask/say/add....
- I'm sorry, I'm not sure I'm being clear.
- I'm sorry, I'll be really quick and not take up too much of your time....

# Use Your Seat at the Table





# And Bring Others to the Table



# What does that look like in your library?

- ✓ Invite a new Director to a meeting with a Community Partner
- ✓ Bring your Assistant Director or another staff member to an administrative meeting
- ✓ Invite your staff to present at a Board meeting
- ✓ Encourage your staff to submit a conference program proposal
- ✓ Recommend your staff for committee appointments or similar recognition
- ✓ Support Professional Development and Continuing Education opportunities



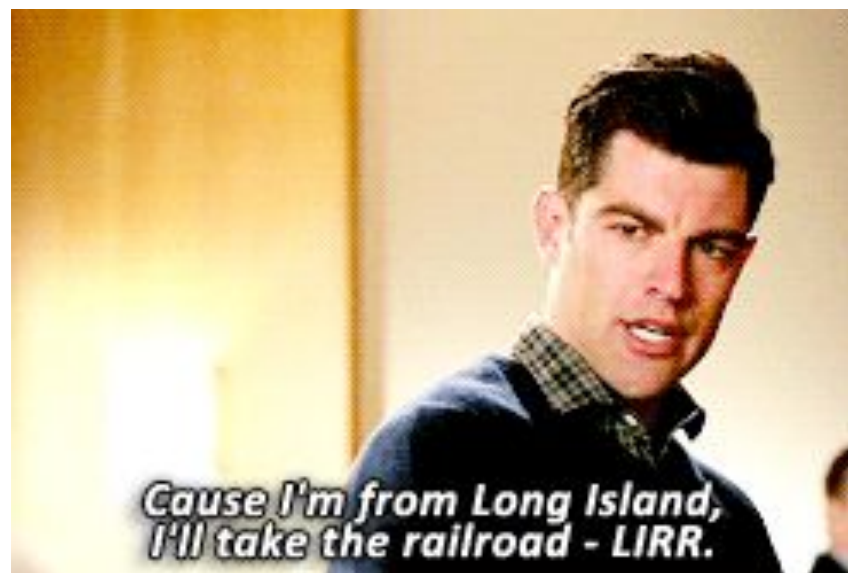
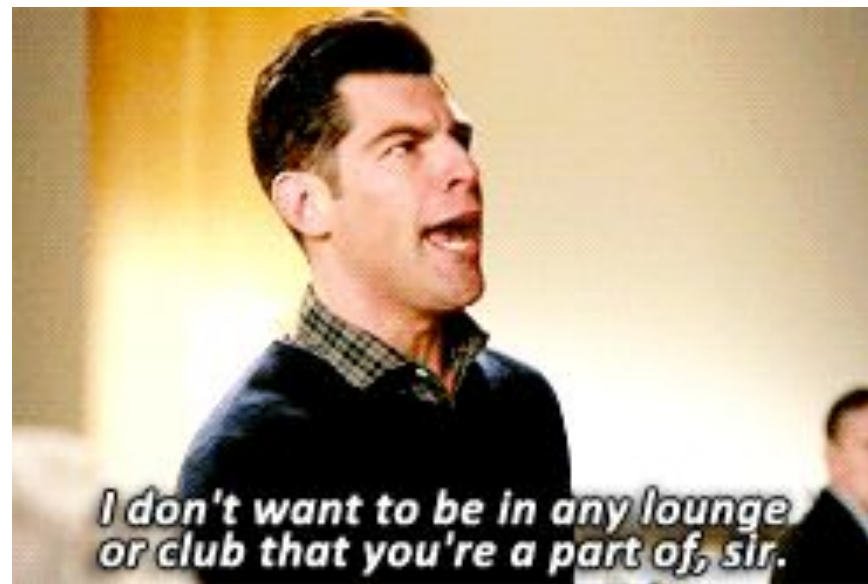
Scarcity  
Mindset



Abundance  
Mindset

Not Everyone Will Like You or Like  
Everything That You Do ...and That is OK









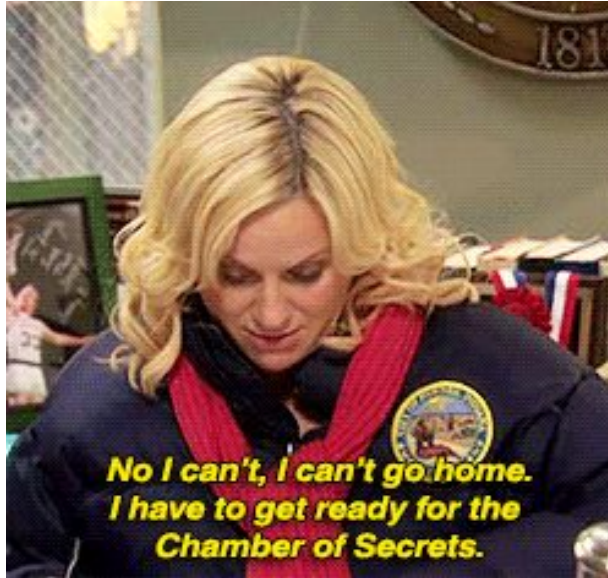
I need everybody, all day long,  
to like me so much.



"Do what you feel in your heart to be right, for you'll be criticized anyway."

-Eleanor Roosevelt

# You Don't Have to Be Everything to Everyone All of the Time



# You Don't Have to Be Everything to Everyone All of the Time

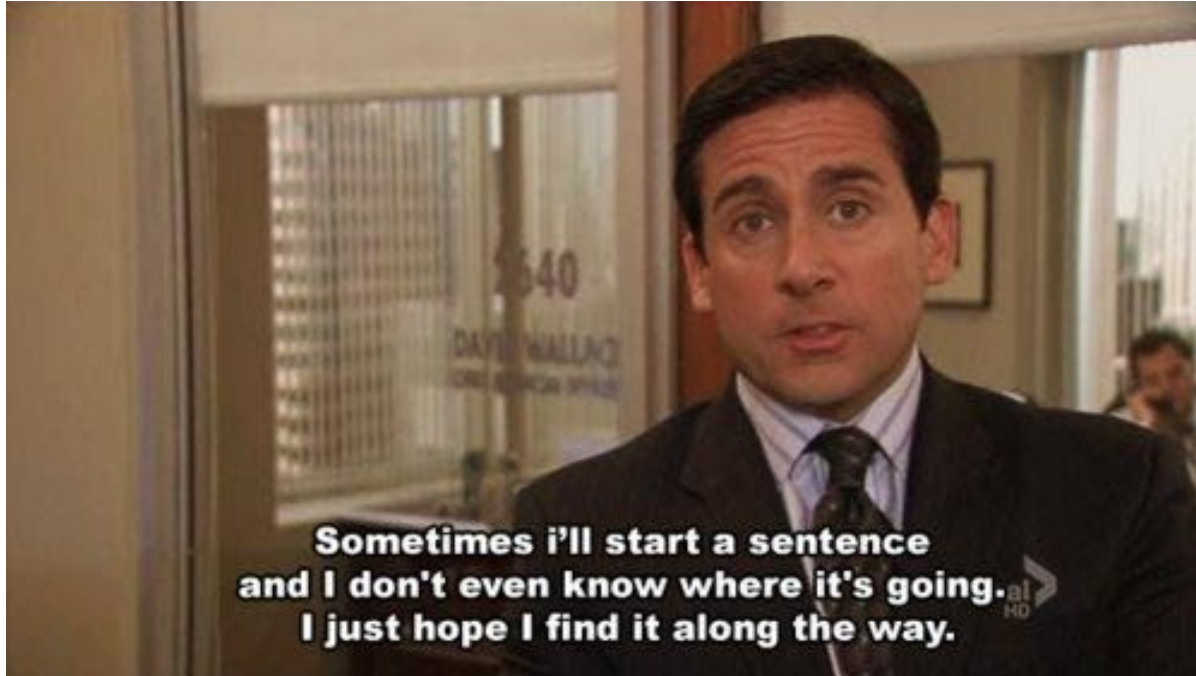
- ✓ It's OK to Say "No."
- ✓ It's OK to Say "I don't know."
- ✓ Delegate
- ✓ Set a sustainable workflow
- ✓ Set boundaries
- ✓ Take your PTO



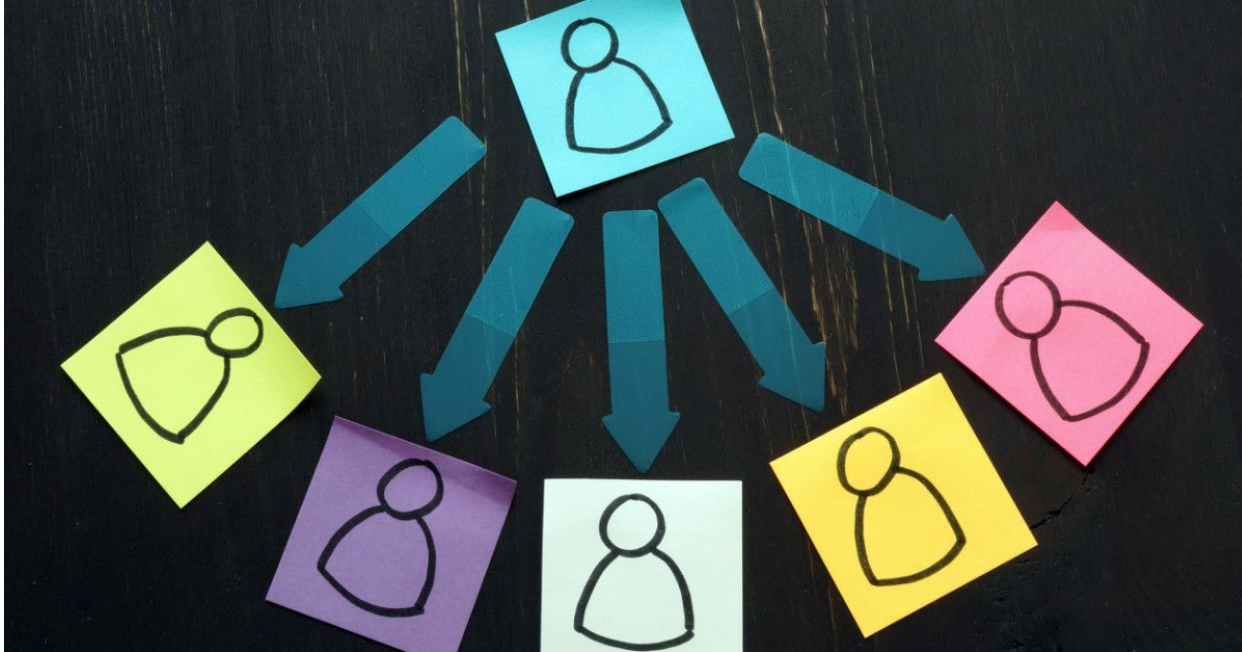
✓ It's OK to Say "No."



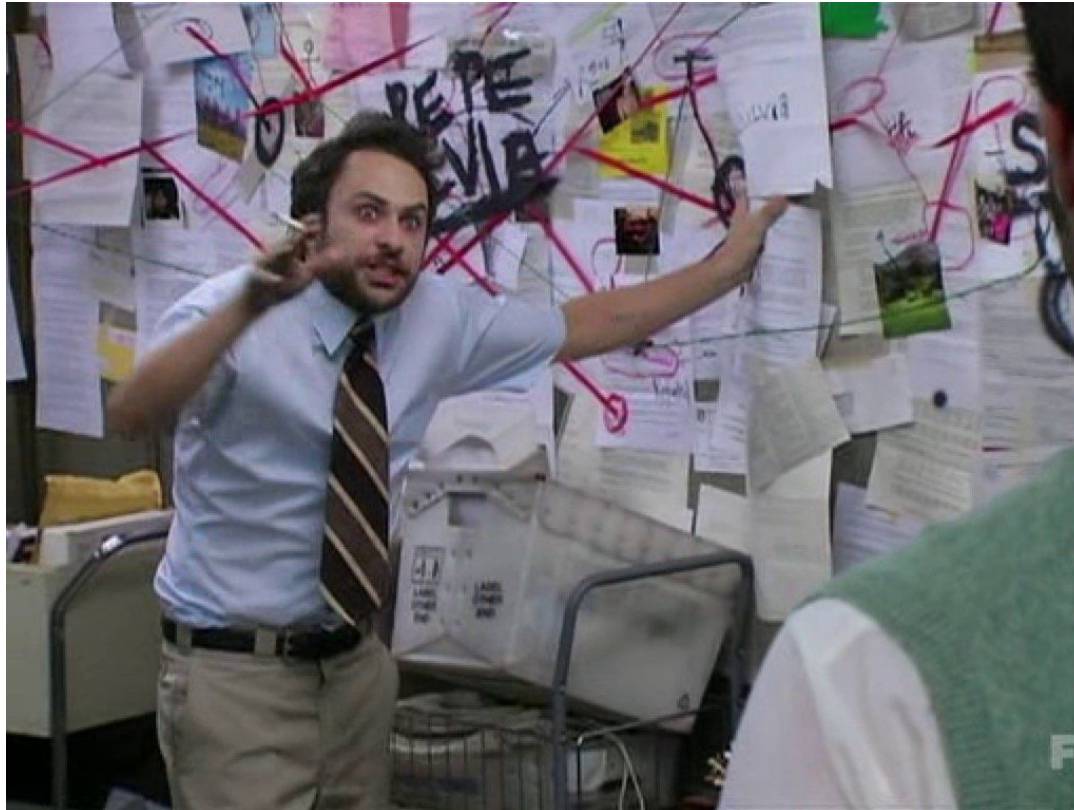
✓ It's OK to Say "I don't know."



## ✓ Delegate



- ✓ Set a sustainable workflow



# ✓ Set boundaries





✓ Take your PTO



“There is no glory in a grind that  
literally grinds you down to dust.”

-Eve Ewing

You Will Make Mistakes... And that is  
OK



# Mistakes Happen

- ✓ Own them
- ✓ Apologize for them
- ✓ Learn from them
- ✓ Don't try to cover them up
- ✓ Never ever ever ever ever throw your staff under the bus

# Get to Know Your Staff



# Then Check-In with Your Staff





# And Keep Checking-In with Your Staff



# And Make Sure Your Board Checks-In with You



# Document Everything



# The Meh, the Bad, and the Ugly



Marketing Library Services

21m · 🌐



Just another reminder to keep your crisis communication plans handy... 😬



⚡ BBC NEWS · 1 MIN READ

**Car crashes through wall into Hythe library**

# The Meh, the Bad, and the Ugly

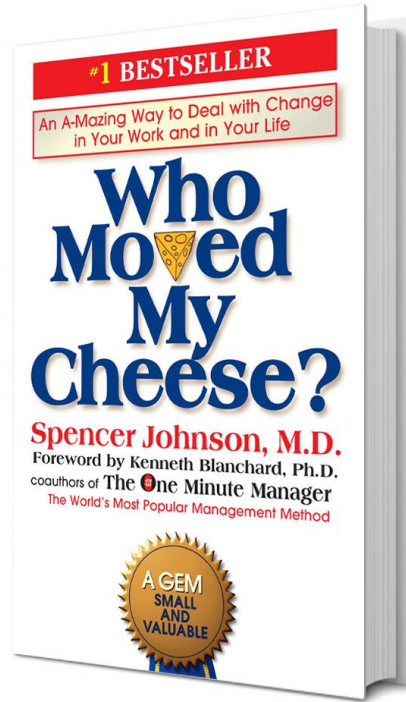
- ✓ You cannot prepare for everything
- ✓ ...but be as proactive as possible
- ✓ Adopt a Disaster/Crisis Plan that identifies a leadership team
- ✓ Be an active listener
- ✓ If you do not have to act immediately, don't
- ✓ Reach out to your library system, HR expert, lawyer, etc.
- ✓ Communicate (and follow-up!) with all appropriate parties
- ✓ Don't be afraid to change course
- ✓ Assess and learn

“People take their cues from you.”

-Evelyn Lieberman



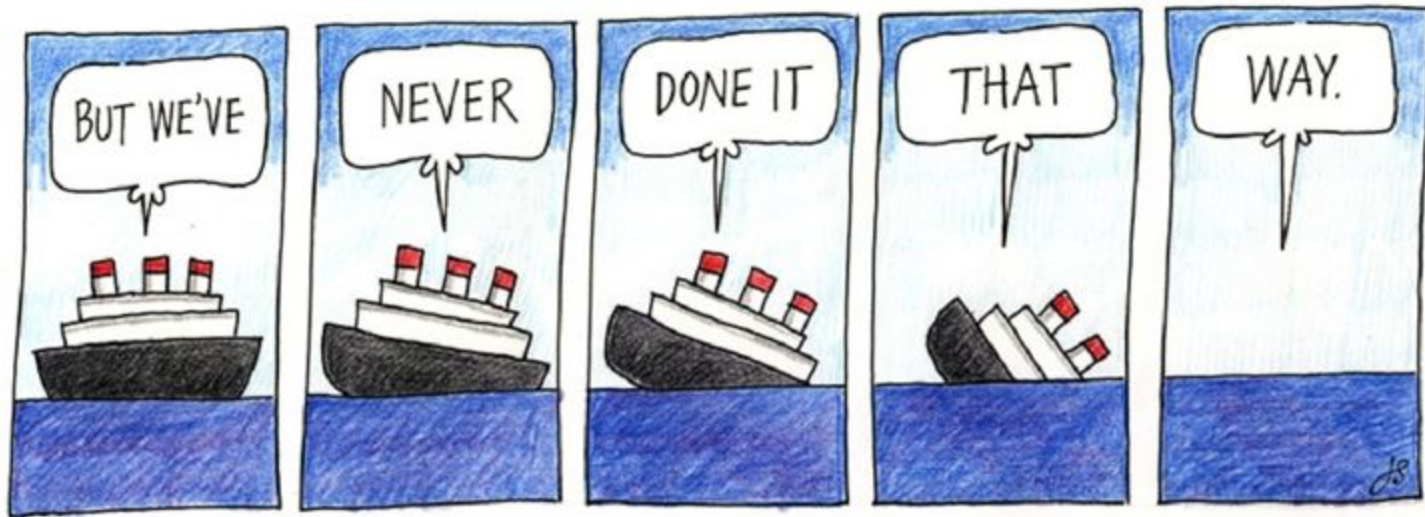
# Ease Into Change



# Follow the Library's Mission



# Be Open...



# Be Open...

- ✓ To learning
- ✓ To ideas
- ✓ To feedback
- ✓ To new ways of doing things

“To see opportunity we must be open to all thoughts.”

-Catherine Pulsifer

# Develop Your Own Style







# Contact



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