



Sorry, Were You Talking To Me? Overcoming Barriers To Communication

Keynote Address: ALA President Loida Garcia-Febo



ALA President Loida Garcia-Febo has served the library profession both domestically and internationally. Her organization, Information New Wave, is a non-profit that seeks to bring access to information to underserved populations. Ms. Garcia-Febo has also served as an elementary school librarian in Puerto Rico, librarian at the University of Puerto Rico, Library Services for Persons with Disabilities' Assistive Technology Information Center, Chief of the SBPI, and Manager at the Queens Library.

She was elected to the ALA Executive Board in 2015 and, in addition to her current position she has held numerous committee appointments within ALA. She has chaired the Intellectual Freedom Round Table, the International Relations Committee, and the Committee on Membership meetings and is currently the Chair of the International Relations Round Table. She is also very active in IFLA as well as REFORMA (The National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish-Speaking).

She is the recipient of numerous awards including the 2015 REFORMA Elizabeth Martinez Lifetime Achievement Award; was named a Notable Member on ALA's International Relations Round Table; received the Elizabeth Futus Catalyst for Change Award in 2010 and was named a Library Journal Mover & Shaker Freedom Fighter in 2007. An ALA/IFLA Fellowship was awarded to her for the 2004 IFLA Congress where she co-established the IFLA New Professionals.

Morning Sessions (choose one)

Anti-Fragile Management: A Re-Imagination of the Annual Review Process

Led by Jane Fisher, Director, and Sunnie Scarpa, Head of Children's Services, Wallingford Public Library

Many organizations are moving away from the traditional annual performance review because a process that is supposed to motivate good work is often doing the opposite. After reading the article *Antifragile Management and the End of the Annual Performance Review* (Public Libraries, May/June 2017), the management team at the Wallingford Public Library was inspired to revamp its employee feedback process. The result is a continuous cycle of feedback from employee to manager and manager to employee through regular one-on-one meetings coupled with longer progress check-ins held three times a year. The desired outcome is a staff comprised of learners who are accountable for their responsibilities, empowered to make decisions, allowed to make mistakes, and challenged to try new things. Sunnie Scarpa and Jane Fisher will walk us through the process that led to the Wallingford Public Library's new *Performance Planning Conversations & Check-Ins* program and describe how it fits into the Library's overall staff development goals.

Let's Keep In Touch!

Led by Dr. Randi Ashton-Pritting, Director, Harrison Libraries, University of Hartford

Email? Phone call? Text? Face to Face? There are many more ways to communicate with each other in the workplace than ever before. There is a time and place for all of these tools to be used, depending on the circumstances. This session will explore the best (and most effective) methods to use in given situations.

Giving and Receiving Criticism: The Basics

Led by Laura Horn, Director of Operations and Caroline Ford, Director of Lending Services, Farmington Library

Criticism is a necessary tool in the workplace. If done right, it enables us to improve professionally without feeling bad about ourselves or our work. Unfortunately, giving and receiving criticism is a difficult skill to master and one that is rarely taught. In this session we will reflect upon our own experiences with criticism and discuss ways to navigate the murky emotional waters. We will highlight tips to prepare you for your next critique, whether you will be giving or receiving the criticism.

Afternoon Sessions

Following lunch, everyone will remain in the same room for the afternoon sessions.

Bridging the Communication Gap in the Workplace

There are many potential obstacles to effective communication in the workplace. Though more men continue to enter the field of librarianship, it remains predominantly staffed by women, and men and women often have very different communication styles. Similarly, our field is one in which many choose to work well into their 70s and even 80s and the communication gap between these more experienced staff and their younger counterparts can put a strain on the individuals and the institutions in which they work. A panel of library professionals will discuss these and other barriers to communication and possible techniques for handling different situations followed by a Q and A session.

Communicating From the Middle

We will begin this session by asking the entire group for examples of ineffective communication that have taken place in the workplace (no names, please!). We will then break into smaller groups, each of which will be assigned to brainstorm how to deal with one of the issues that are identified and then give a brief report on potential strategies that could be utilized.