

# Get relevant: a message for managers

Lee Welch

Most of us in the library and information sector are now publicly agreeing that we really do not know what the future will hold.

One side effect of that 'great unknown' — which information professionals are now being asked to embrace as our normal working environment — is the mad scramble to get enough people trained in new skills and systems. It is a 'back-footed' sort of business simply because of the rate of change and underlying confusion over future directions.

If you cannot say for certain which specific skills will be needed then the focus for skill development shifts to ensuring staff are able to cope with whatever the future hurls at them. The job of managers, now more vital and vulnerable than ever, is the organisational antidote to future shock.

Managers are getting caught by the pace of change and the restructuring squeeze everywhere. As organisational roles are redefined, so are the roles of managers. Cat-like agility is called for when you are accountable not only for the bottom line, but also

the strategy for the future. To meet the challenge, the shift has to be away from process-driven training to the development of managers who can instil an organisational culture able to make the most of change.

Leadership has been identified as a critical skill for successful managers in this environment and AIMA think the issues of leadership at all levels in the sector are paramount.

AIMA has devised the *Magellan leadership institute* (to follow on from the *Aurora leadership institute*) aimed at chief executive level, and have now extended their manager development series to include the *Skills update 300*, aimed at senior managers devoted to the skills and relationships leaders must develop to succeed in what they call a 'complex service world'.

As managers rethink their jobs and shift focus to their roles as change-makers and guides, these skills become essential to survival. We may not know what the future looks like, but we know that it is in our hands. ■

## Preserving the memory

The department of librarianship, archives and records at Monash University, Clayton is embarking on a number of new initiatives this year. Students are now able to undertake a Master of Arts (Librarianship) by coursework, as well as by coursework and minor thesis. A wide range of subjects are available, as students are able to select subjects from other departments and faculties at Monash. Resulting from the inquiries received when the coursework masters were announced the department is now planning to offer a masters by distance education with subjects being staged in from 1997. This program will include librarianship subjects as well as those relating to archives and records management, and there will be an emphasis on the electronic environment.

In early October, prior to ALIA's conference in Melbourne, the department will be running an intensive, five-day course, *Preserving the memory*. This will be led by Jeavons Baillie, chief conservator, State Library of Victoria, and will focus on management issues relating to the preservation of all

media formats — from paper through to digital impulse. It is designed for practitioners in the field and those with management responsibility for preservation. A limited number of places will also be available for Masters students at Monash.

In conjunction with Monash University library, the department is developing a range of projects under the umbrella of the Virtual Library Research Project, and it is hoped that a number of scholarships will be available from the Faculty of Computing and Information Technology next year for students wishing to undertake research in these areas, as part of their Masters and PhDs.

Plans are also underway to develop the honours year of the new Bachelor of Information Management which started last year. The department will be liaising with ALIA and other bodies regarding professional recognition of the course.

For further information on any of these initiatives, contact Mary Lou Maroney, phone (03) 9905 2959; fax (03) 9905 2952 or e-mail: [seclar@arts.monash.edu.au](mailto:seclar@arts.monash.edu.au). ■



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ACE Training, Level 3/10 Market Street, Brisbane. Contact: Trimagic Software, Authorised Training Centre. Ph: (02) 413 1799, Fax: (02) 413 1710.

• **Queensland library techs** 'An evening with Phil' Metway Theatre, State Library. 5 for 5.30pm. RSVP 24/5 to Alisa O'Donnel (07) 3259 3025.

• **29/5 Library tour of maps unit at SLQld** 12-1pm. Host: Steve Scamp, meet in the foyer of Level 2. RSVP Meg Jones Ph: (07) 3237 1282 by 21 May. Limited numbers.

**25-27/6 Insearch/Knight-Ridder information seminars**. Introductory DIALOG (25/6), Datastar/ProBase (26/6 am) Business (27/6). Brisbane Contact (02) 212 2867.

### SA

• **10/5 SA branch (ALW activity)** is conducting a half-day seminar titled: *The Internet and the local economy*. For further information contact: Ian McBain, Ph: (08) 201 3290, Fax: (08) 201 3186.

• **15/5 Information science section (SA)** meet for an update on the exciting developments in the *SLSA (Susan Ball)* and *PLAIN (Vanessa Little)* at the Institute Building, Lecture Theatre, SLSA of South Australia. Time: drinks from 5.30pm then 6-7pm. Contact Fiona Thomson (08) 302 3280, e-mail: [fiona.thomson@unisa.edu.au](mailto:fiona.thomson@unisa.edu.au).

### TAS

• **6/5 Tas branch: Australian Library Week official opening** by Wayne Crawford. Foyer of the SLTas. For further information contact: Patsy Jones, Ph: (002) 337 465, Fax: (002) 310 927 e-mail: [sltpj@ecc.tased.edu.au](mailto:sltpj@ecc.tased.edu.au).

**17-20/6 Insearch/Knight-Ridder information seminars** DIALOG UPDATE-Hobart (17/6 am), Introductory DIALOG (18/6), Beyond the Basics (19/6), TRADSTAT Workshop (20/6 am). Hobart Contact 02 212 2867.

### VIC

• **Telelink meetings of committee for ALIA rural and isolated libraries' SIG: 1996**. Due to high cost of telelink meetings in 1995, none have been held in the first half of 1996. One possibly in August and December. *Aphelion Issues*: August, December 1996.

• **6/5 am VIC branch: Supreme Court library, Parliamentary library** and one other (TBA) open to the Public as part of Australian Library Week celebrations. Contact Margie Anderson, Ph: (03) 9315 3511, Fax: (03) 9315 3522, e-mail: [libjobs@libjobs.com.au](mailto:libjobs@libjobs.com.au).

• **6/5 VIC branch: Launch of Australian Library Week** during a reception at the Parliamentary Library. Highlights will include the presentation of ALIA's Metcalfe Medallion and the ALIA Award for Innovation (proudly sponsored by FLIS). Contact Margie Anderson, Ph: (03) 9315 3511, Fax: (03) 9315 3522, e-mail: [libjobs@libjobs.com.au](mailto:libjobs@libjobs.com.au).

• **7/5 Geelong regional group Woolstore campus visit** (Deakin Uni).

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