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### Michigan-style Leadership

by Jo Budler

To lead: to guide or direct in a course. This is what a good leader does. But in today's world it is not enough to be a good leader. We need effective leaders who are able to bring about outcomes. A truly effective leader does not necessarily show the way by "going in advance" but rather by bringing together individuals to make a strong team. The strongest team, and hence the most effective, is one that is united by the goals of the organization and the commitment of the team members to these goals and to one another.

A strong leader, like the coach of a winning team, recognizes the strengths of each team member and places that person in a position that allows these strengths to be used for the common good. Ideally this allows strengths to grow and individuals to excel. It is not unlike the runner who, allowed to run, develops greater endurance and greater strength. Today's leader must identify the strengths of each individual and the appropriate time and place to allow each individual to take the lead. Today's most effective leaders are more like coaches: bringing individuals into the planning process and then allowing these same individuals to "play" or lead the effort.

The Library of Michigan is playing a leadership role in several areas that have a direct impact on the delivery of library service to Michigan residents. Perhaps the most active right now is ATLAS, the Action Team for Library Advancement Statewide. This team grew out of the Preferred Futures Conference and is working on the design of a statewide information delivery service which will link all Michigan residents to the information they need, when they need it, where they need it, and in the format they desire. Components of the system will include electronic delivery of full-text and digitized resources, as well as physical delivery of those items not yet available electronically. There will be an easy-to-use finding tool that will point to the valuable resources found in Michigan libraries, on the Web, and in other collections, and will provide the means to access and use these resources.

Several teams have been formed around each component of the ATLAS effort: Document Delivery, Digitization, ILL Policies, Portal, Promotion, Resource Sharing, and Training. In addition, there is a team working on Long-term Planning. Each of these teams has a leader and includes 5-10 librarians from all types of libraries across the state who are volunteering their time to help make ATLAS a reality. While the leaders of these teams are certainly providing the direction for the individual teams, it is clear that the forward movement is being provided by the team members. It is these members who are bringing forward the policies to guide interlibrary loan transactions, who are examining portal options, and who have contributed to the digitization plan which will be submitted to IMLS

in February. It is expected that the recommendations of each team will be submitted and incorporated into a single report no later than Summer 2002.

For further information, visit the [Library of Michigan's ATLAS Web site](#) or contact [Jo Budler](#), Deputy State Librarian, Library of Michigan.

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