

Lisa Romero

Making the Meeting

Resources for effective meetings

Have you ever wanted useful guidance in planning and managing a meeting? How do you get the most accomplished with the least amount of effort? How do you keep committee members involved without sacrificing spontaneity and creativity?

ALA President Lorlene Roy has teamed with Lisa Romero, 2007 chair of the ACRL Education and Behavioral Sciences Section (EBSS) and communications librarian at the University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign, to bring you answers to the above questions and more . . . much, much more. Together, they are enacting the 2006 EBSS Action Plan through the creation of a suite of new resources to help improve meeting effectiveness for librarians around the globe.

Assisting with the project is Eli Mina, an expert on meetings and effective decision making who has advised clients from government, business and industry, academia, and the nonprofit sector and is the author of several books on meetings and decision making.

Mina's substantial experience allows him to cut through the fluff to deliver poignant directions and truly useful ideas placed firmly in the grasp of professional librarians.

What will "Making the Meeting" deliver to ALA members?

Specifically, the following areas are addressed:

- organizing, planning, and running productive meetings

 - goal setting

 - role and responsibilities of the committee chair

 - discussion facilitation and work-load distribution

 - meeting management and delegation

 - how to avoid chaotic, adversarial, and aimless meetings

 - rules of order and minute-taking

Making the Meeting resources help ALA members improve their skills as meeting facilitators with a variety of resources aimed

at helping current and future ALA members improve their meeting management skills:

- podcasts that fit the time you have

- tip sheets that keep information organized

- handouts to assist before, during, and after the

- meeting

 - to-do lists, check lists, and other lists to use in meeting planning

 - a Web site that keeps all the information organized and a few clicks away

 - a list of resources to help perfect meeting skills



From left to right, *C&RL News* Editor-in-Chief David Free, Lisa Romero, and Eli Mina record *Making the Meeting* podcasts at the 2008 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia.

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Many of these resources will also be available in Spanish.

Why does ALA need meeting effectiveness resources?

One of the most common functions served by leaders in the association and by librarians nationwide is their capacity to conduct productive meetings and guide individual participation in group efforts. Yet, many professional librarians avoid leadership duties and positions because they feel overwhelmed with all they are expected to do. Their anxiety is further heightened because frequently their

weak facilitation skills make them unable to organize others and produce results. By improving the facilitation skills employed by the leadership of ALA, these abilities will be passed on in meetings through example and expectation to future leaders, thereby enhancing the natural process of succession within ALA and increasing the pool of capable and willing members.

ALA wants to help the whole organization by focusing on individual needs.

Making the Meeting resources are available online at www.ala.org/makingthemeeting. ❧

(“Exposing hidden collections” continued from page 317)

provide as much Web-accessible information about their manuscript materials as possible. Participants were asked to encourage their institutions to provide collection-level records for all collections, especially unprocessed ones. But many special collections are still engaged in retrospective conversion of the finding aids for their processed collections, and UCLA’s Department of Special Collections is no exception.

Out of a total of some 1,700 collections, we have converted finding aids for more than 1,400—the highest number in the State of California.² But this has not been an easy task. Most of the work has been done on soft money, requiring continual efforts to obtain funds to sustain the project. Now, on a permanent basis, a team of two continues conversion of legacy finding aids and attends to revisions and additions to existing online finding aids. Even though encoding legacy finding aids is a labor-intensive undertaking, it is an effort that immeasurably benefits our researchers. As new finding aids become viewable online, we have seen, over and over, that researchers are at our door to consult the collections they describe. But it must be said that a consequence of our success has been that staff whose primary focus was the processing of collections are now almost wholly engaged in handling reader requests, reference inquiries, and licensing agreements—leaving them almost no time for processing.

A national strategy advised by participants in the ARL conference was that of expanding access to hidden collections by leveraging digitization efforts, and at UCLA we have done so by means of a number of projects. The most ambitious of these was to select and digitize 5,700 published and unpublished black-and-white newspaper photographs from the *Los Angeles Times* and from the *Los Angeles Daily News* photographic archives.³

Funded by the California Digital Library, the project involved selecting images from a collection of negatives, estimated to number between 3 and 4 million, that capture the development and culture of Los Angeles from the late 1800s through 1989. This project allowed us to create a new scholarly resource that is attracting considerable excitement and use.

If local action is the heart of the emerging national strategy for addressing the challenges of hidden collections, UCLA has shown that, even when budgetary times are lean, it can find opportunities and creative solutions for meeting those challenges.

Notes

1. See www2.library.ucla.edu/specialcollections/researchlibrary/12280.cfm.
2. See www.oac.cdlib.org/institutions/ark:/13030/tf129008pn.
3. See unitproj.library.ucla.edu/dlib/lat. ❧