

## Interim leadership in a crisis

Item Type	Book chapter
Authors	Piotto, Livia
Citation	Piotto, Livia. "Interim Leadership in a Crisis." In <i>Managing Crises in the Academic Library: Past, Present, and Future</i> , edited by Doris Van Kampen-Breit, 371–82. Association of College and Research Libraries, 2023.
Publisher	Association of College and Research Libraries
Rights	Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 4.0 International
Download date	2025-03-17 13:45:59
Item License	<a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/</a>
Link to Item	<a href="https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14490/27">https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14490/27</a>

# Interim Leadership in a Crisis

*Livia Piotto*

---

*The interim head librarian assumed the role of reassuring the staff that the library was not left rudderless and that someone was ready to step in and move the library forward. At the same time, she had to acknowledge that a period of mourning was necessary for everyone in the team and that everyone was coping with grief in different ways.*

---

## Introduction

Periods of disruptive change, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, have invariably had a great impact in the world of the libraries, challenging the library staff in many unexpected ways to embrace chance and resilience and to step up in confronting the difficulties. Disruption also offers opportunities. Managing change in libraries has always been quite a challenge under normal circumstances, and the 2020 pandemic proved to be an extraordinary crisis for managing any library. The challenge became even bigger when the disruptive moment of change needed to be managed with only interim leadership.

The role of the library manager in critical situations is essential for any library to effectively function with minimum disruption in services and staff. The director of the library is like the captain in a ship. What happens when the library faces a crisis within a crisis and loses the library leader first to illness and then to a sudden and unexpected death? In case of sudden loss, there are grief and emotions to deal with, and even more so when library staff are already affected by the increased fatigue caused by the pandemic. Nevertheless, it was, and is, necessary to keep the library running as smoothly as possible, and the role of interim director becomes even more important when faced with two severe upheavals at once.

In this chapter, based on personal experience, the author will discuss how the sudden loss of the library manager can impact the work of all involved, but mostly of the person who is called to take over the director's responsibilities—especially during a crisis. The COVID-19 pandemic hit John Cabot University library in the same way it hit every other library in Italy and other countries around the world. The March 2020 lockdown dictated by the Italian government forced everyone to work remotely and to transfer all library services online.

Following the directives of the Italian government to plan on slowly reopening the country, the university started planning its reopening in the summer 2020, and the then-head librarian was naturally the person in charge to make all decisions related to library services and operations. When we all went back to work in person in September 2020, the head librarian had to take a sudden leave to take care of her health. At first, operations and services, including the work of the library staff, continued normally, especially because the head librarian was consulting from home and directing the regular operations. However, her prolonged sick leave required the university administration to take action to continue to ensure all operations proceeded smoothly. Legally, in Italy, while a person is on sick leave, that person is bound to not do any type of work, and official decisions on behalf of the head librarian were required while she was away. After almost fifteen years as a loyal collaborator, the reference and instruction coordinator was called to act on behalf of the head librarian while still performing her regular duties. The distinction between *acting* and *interim* is subtle, and, in many contexts, the two terms are used interchangeably,<sup>1</sup> but in this situation it is a distinction that is worth making, although officially the temporary job title that was given to the reference and instruction coordinator always remained interim head librarian.

For the purposes of this chapter, the initial temporary position, which was only a way to work on behalf of the person who was on sick leave, will be referred to as *acting head librarian*, while *interim head librarian* will be used for the second, longer period, when the author assumed control in a more official capacity after the sudden and unexpected death of the head librarian until a decision was made to officially replace the position.

## The Unexpected Interim Leadership

As Irwin and deVries point out, there is a gap in the literature related to interim leadership in libraries; most of the articles that discuss the issue examine how the interim leaders can prepare themselves for the role, providing personal experiences as examples.<sup>2</sup> Irwin and deVries compile a very comprehensive literature review on interim leadership in librarianship, but the literature they include refers mostly to the typical situation that sees the retirement of library directors or their move to a different position as the principal cause that starts the process of searching for and appointing an interim director. Not much has been written on how interim leaders can prepare themselves for the case of the sudden death of the person they are going to replace.

With the awareness that every library is different and understanding that the same situation could be handled in an entirely different way in another institutional context,

this chapter examines one experience, or a case study, of an interim head librarian called in to temporarily replace the former library leader in a highly stressful period of profound crisis, comparing it with what the literature considers recommended practices and trying to assess what was learned from the situation.

All studies on interim leadership recommend that those willing to accept such a temporary appointment clarify expectations and responsibilities prior to the appointment itself, as well as the compensation, length of the appointment, and clearly outlined goals of the position.<sup>3</sup> In this situation at John Cabot University, there was no time for these initial discussions or decisions. The administration needed a person to step into the role fast, to keep all the operational procedures in place without any further disruption, given that the circumstances were already very complex due to the COVID-19 pandemic and new decisions needed to be made almost daily to respond to the constantly changing external circumstances. The administration called for a person who could become the acting head librarian and help run the library in a critical moment while maintaining a sense of stability in the transition. Subsequently, the presence of a person already invested in the interim role helped minimize as much as possible the emotional stress created by the unexpected loss of the library leader. Having worked at John Cabot University for over a decade, the reference and instruction coordinator knew the institution, the people, and the library staff and, most importantly, had an awareness of the expectations and demands of the job under the current pandemic conditions.

As Munde points out, “the library director is a difficult vacancy to fill on an interim basis”<sup>4</sup> because the person who is appointed as interim director usually does not have significant leadership or management training or specific preparation to do the job,<sup>5</sup> but the expertise of the retiring or leaving director might still be available. In the extreme case of the sudden loss of the director, there is no official means of passing the baton, as might normally happen. In this situation, while during the initial phase there was constant contact and exchange between the head librarian and the acting head, after the sudden passing of the official leader, not only there was no time for an official handover of the responsibilities, but also all the aspects of the job itself needed to be reconstructed from scratch and rapidly, especially under the conditions caused by the pandemic. By utilizing teamwork and by doing a lot of digging in past documentation, some processes, policies, and procedures could be modified for current circumstances. The position might be immediately filled with the presence of an interim director, but the specific contribution provided by the former director remained a vacuum. Therefore, the interim head librarian needed to rely on staff’s expertise to make some basic decisions, collecting knowledge about the job from library colleagues who worked closely with the previous director or colleagues in other university areas that had close relationships with the former director.<sup>6</sup>

As Matthews notes in her description of the stages of the Nicholson and West Transition Cycles Model through which a new library leader should normally expect to transition when assuming the role,<sup>7</sup> becoming interim director after a precipitous termination does not allow for the first stage of the model, preparedness, to happen. The interim director usually jumps into the encounter stage without much preparedness for the job, and it becomes essential to accelerate the process of learning new job competencies. Additionally,

as Sandra Shell notes, being an interim director involves a lot of stress and more difficulties than one might expect.<sup>8</sup> This is certainly what happens in normal circumstances. The level of stress and the difficulties undoubtedly increase when the interim position happens without a period of transition or formal succession planning. Given the lack of a formal handover, it was critical for the newly appointed interim head librarian to build up current and new relationships and find a way to get many questions answered. This was possible only with the help and support of other library staff members. Even if the new role was formally as a superior, asking for help was indeed a successful strategy to access the knowledge and the training needed and to allow former colleagues to feel empowered to be part of the change. As Thomson notes, “loss, grief and trauma are profoundly personal, but they are also *community* issues,”<sup>9</sup> and the fact that the interim head librarian relied a lot on the expertise of the staff made them feel that they were contributing to the change process that the circumstances forced upon them. Decisions were not just made, they were discussed collegially, and they became part of the learning process of the interim head librarian, who could start reconstructing her new job responsibilities that the former head librarian never had the time to formally hand over. Trusting the library staff to take ownership of their job responsibilities and duties created a sense of community that allowed them to embrace the grieving process as a group and not to feel left alone dealing with their grief and sense of abandonment. When change has a lot of emotions behind it—loss and grief in this circumstance—it can trigger strong responses, but grief can also be “transformational”<sup>10</sup> and become the trigger for allowing the staff to grow in their professional roles and to build a deeper commitment to the team and the job.

However, despite the trust that the administration put in the interim head librarian, this remained a temporary position until an official decision to replace the library director was made. As normally happens in similar circumstances, it is difficult to make long-term decisions because of the uncertainty of the appointment itself,<sup>11</sup> but at the same time, the interim director has to act with the same mindset and accountability the permanent position requires,<sup>12</sup> while also coping with the stress a new position creates, especially when the replacement is entirely unexpected.<sup>13</sup> The uncertainty of the duration of the appointment makes planning and organizational change more difficult, as the majority of the scholarship, not only in academic librarianship but also in management, around interim leadership positions concurs.<sup>14</sup> That same uncertainty, however, can also protect the interim director from making important decisions too quickly in a highly stressful situation like the loss of the previous director, compounded by the pandemic, which is in itself an uncertain moment that requires fast decision-making to respond to the institution’s plans that vary day by day.

The uncertainty created by the pandemic and by the unexpected loss of the head librarian required the library staff to find a way to make sense of their working lives after the traumatic events. The biggest challenge in this situation is that both the interim director and the senior administrators, who will also be grieving the loss of an esteemed colleague and coping with the general anxiety created by the pandemic, have to “exercise great sensitivity and diplomacy”<sup>15</sup> toward the other employees, who may express difficulties in handling the circumstances—sudden loss of their manager, confusion regarding

leadership, and a sense of abandonment, but also uncertainty about what was happening in the world—which can result in lack of concentration and focus in the workplace. The same difficulties were experienced by the interim head librarian as well, but the uncertain duration of the job also protected the interim leader from rushing into the new role without preparation. As is common in many similar cases, other university constituencies proved respectful of the grief and did not demand that important decisions be made, especially if decisions were not time-sensitive and could be postponed. For this to happen, however, the senior administration must be able to fully trust the interim director.

The shield of the uncertainty also offers the possibility of buying more time to better understand the dynamics of the new role, especially since the person appointed to be the interim director sees a sudden role shift from being an expert in the previous job to being a neophyte in dealing with managerial responsibilities. The literature about interim positions often stresses that the interim role for a person appointed internally frequently means wearing the old hat while managing the new role, thus aggravating an already complicated situation.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, while the interim appointee has little more than a vague idea of what the new job takes, the two concurrent jobs must be accomplished with “equal attention.”<sup>17</sup> There will be mistakes, but skills can be transferred from the previous job, and although it is perfectly reasonable to feel unsure about being able to do the new job and to feel unprepared for the challenge, this “sense of difficulty”<sup>18</sup> can be overcome by relying on the support of the rest of the staff and by trusting them and feeling comfortable in delegating tasks.

Being in this uncertain role for a while and trying to decide whether to apply for the permanent position or not, the interim head librarian found it helpful to seek professional development and training opportunities to learn leadership and managerial skills. The position itself created the conditions for a great learning experience that ended up facilitating the development of new skills and the possibility of flexing new muscles.<sup>19</sup> Even beginning to understand that a person in a leadership position does not have to be flawless was essential to understanding that being the interim director did not mean knowing everything; rather, it meant empowering the staff to take more ownership, with less supervision, and allowing them to become more accountable for their work.<sup>20</sup> While the interim head librarian had just lost her mentor at work, she sought advice from other colleagues at different institutions, and they soon became essential mentoring figures for her growth as a new leader. Coaching and mentoring are to be considered key tools for anyone in an interim position, independently of whether one wants to apply for the permanent position or not, because the advice from experienced colleagues is always vital for putting things in perspective. A mentor can help you see potential pitfalls that can be encountered while leading a library and that are simply not taken into consideration due to lack of experience.<sup>21</sup>

What is obvious is that, when a librarian is asked to step in and become the interim director after the sudden passing of the former director, no effective succession planning can be put into place because of the unexpected event. It is true that typically succession planning in academic libraries tends to be a minor priority,<sup>22</sup> even in institutions that are getting ready to fill positions that are close to being vacant due to a planned retirement.

Following Singer and Griffith's definition of *succession planning* as "a systematic effort by the library to ensure continuity in key positions, retain and develop intellectual and knowledge capital for the future, and encourage individual advancement,"<sup>23</sup> this process means also identifying potential employees who can be trained for key leadership positions when needed, but this concept is in contrast with the forced training imposed by the interim appointment as library director. Usually, for an interim director selected internally, "workplace learning is a major source of leadership growth."<sup>24</sup>

## Grief and Emotions in Interim Leadership

There is a dearth of publications dealing with sudden loss and grief in the library as a workplace, and even less can be found describing what happens after the sudden and unexpected death of the library director. In general, the death of a member of the work family can have a long-lasting impact both in terms of coping with grief, which is a different process for each member of the work family, and in terms of how the work is then reorganized.<sup>25</sup> Any death in the workplace brings an "emotional toll on the staff, but there is also an issue of compromised productivity."<sup>26</sup> Vacancies in leadership positions always bring disruption in the regular operational workflow, and they often leave staff members with a sense of uncertainty. If the vacancy is abrupt, the feeling of being left with no direction is clearly amplified by the other feelings that might overwhelm the staff, who also need to process the sudden void. Therefore, the interim director must take on the unique and challenging opportunity to "simultaneously [comfort] people and [motivate] them to continue doing their jobs."<sup>27</sup>

As Topper notes, when an employee dies, the rest of the staff will look to the supervisor to set an example on how to deal with the situation.<sup>28</sup> When the person who dies is the supervisor, the staff will look at the newly appointed leader, who might be struggling with the same emotional issues but also must quickly learn how to become the leader and set the example. Moreover, sudden loss does not allow any planning, and intense emotions may also appear months after the death, when specific projects or tasks were previously set to be accomplished.<sup>29</sup>

The quick transition provided by the interim director can help minimize potential disruption, but how does it leave the interim director? Besides being intrigued and excited by the idea of trying something new and possibly advancing in one's career, *vulnerable* is the term that comes to mind, and it is definitely how the interim head librarian felt when asked to transition from acting to interim director. *Vulnerability* is defined by Brené Brown as "the emotion that we experience during times of uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure,"<sup>30</sup> and it is essential for library leaders because it helps to create trust in two directions, in the others, the colleagues, and in ourselves: being vulnerable requires being able to trust.<sup>31</sup> While grieving the loss of a colleague, even if one is superior in rank, it is easy to feel, for quite a long time, a sense of vulnerability mixed with deep emotional displacement for having unjustly taken a job that might not feel rightfully taken.

For a long time and even until this day, emotions have been considered out of place in the working environment, but not only do they perfectly belong to the workplace, but

they also lead to actions.<sup>32</sup> Allowing oneself to grieve and to use that grief in one's daily tasks can help the person deal with the situation and start the healing process. It can also help in making sense of the loss and beginning to move on. Nevertheless, these circumstances require a wise use of emotions. The interim head librarian had to quickly learn how to respond to emotions in the new job role because "too little emotion and a leader runs the risk of looking like a robot, but showing too much emotion can make a leader appear to not be in control of the situation or themselves."<sup>33</sup> Being in control of emotions in the critical moment that followed the death of the director, who was also a dear friend and a mentor, during a pandemic that disrupted all the normal library operations, not to mention the entire world, was one of the most difficult things the interim head librarian had to experience in her working life. In similar circumstances it is easy to feel the pressure to maintain control when things fall apart, but sometimes it is essential to show one's vulnerable side.<sup>34</sup> "By showing [the staff] there is no shame in authentic emotion, you're giving them a platform to experience their own processes of grieving"<sup>35</sup> because the unexpected change in leadership leaves the staff undoubtedly confused about their identity and, in some cases, profoundly hurt.

While the interim head librarian became the point person to lead the library, all she wanted and needed to do was process her grief and cry. She lost a mentor and a friend, after all. Admitting her own vulnerability and sadness was the way to establish a new bond with the rest of the staff, one based on trust and empathy. However, as always happens with internally appointed interim directors, it is impossible not to "carry some existing perceptions"<sup>36</sup> due to the preexisting relationships with the rest of the staff, but also depending on the "perceptions related to the predecessor.... When perception of the predecessor is positive, everyone will want the [interim director] to work in the same style."<sup>37</sup> Independently of how the rest of the staff had perceived the former director, the interim head librarian had to acknowledge that each member of the staff was grieving in their own way, but they were all also grieving as a group, like children who lost a parent.<sup>38</sup>

As Klare suggests, using emotional intelligence and empathy to focus on yourself and on others can help keep the staff as a cohesive group.<sup>39</sup> The interim head librarian assumed the role of reassuring the staff that the library was not left rudderless and that someone was ready to step in and move the library forward. At the same time, she had to acknowledge that a period of mourning was necessary for everyone in the team and that everyone was coping with grief in different ways. It is important for the interim director to support the staff in a highly stressful moment, but at the same time the interim director needs to learn how to reframe the relationship with those who used to be peers and to adjust the personnel dynamics, overcoming the awkwardness of suddenly being the boss and acknowledging that the new relationship demands isolation from the same people who were colleagues.<sup>40</sup> Kobulnicky describes the new dynamics with a sad but realistic image: "the library director is the loneliest job in the university."<sup>41</sup>

Being asked to fill her late supervisor's role felt as if the interim head librarian was taking that role away from the former director or that she did not deserve it. Taking the place of a person she had worked with for almost fifteen years created a sense of guilt for filling the vacant position not for her own merits but because the necessities and the



circumstances required her to do so. This survivor's guilt can last for a long time,<sup>42</sup> and at present the author still feels that she is filling this position only temporarily because the rightful owner will eventually come back. The sense of abandonment created by the sudden death caused, and still causes, the interim director to be constantly thinking how the former director would have handled specific situations or trying to make the right decision that she would have approved. There is also a twinge of guilt in seeing that some processes have developed in a more effective way than they would have had following the directions of the former director. But there is also a sense that the library team has grown stronger having gone through this tough moment together.

## Conclusion

Any crisis, as a moment of unexpected change, adds new layers of complexity to the role of the leader. The fast-changing nature of the crisis brings more complexity to the decision-making process, given that it increases the speed at which decisions, even the simplest ones, need to be made. A crisis creates uncertainty and disruption, and “leading during a crisis requires leaders to be agile and resilient, and open to the challenges that the crisis brings.”<sup>43</sup> Every crisis is unique; what John Cabot University Library faced were three overlapping crises: the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for someone to take over managerial responsibilities to support the head librarian who was on sick leave, and then the grief caused by her unexpected death and transitioning to interim leadership. The uncertainty of the situation created by these three critical intersecting circumstances predictably created sudden, unexpected, and unfamiliar problems. Any leader in a critical situation must be agile in making decisions and responding to the fluidity of the situation. The interim leader who takes the job in a similarly critical situation needs to quickly learn how to respond to the challenges posed—which in this case were the pandemic and the consequent fluctuating institutional situation, but also the emotional trauma created by the effect of pandemic on staff members and the sudden death of a leader. The need during the pandemic “to work concurrently and collaboratively in order to achieve leadership outcomes”<sup>44</sup> was institutionalized by the interim role. “Having someone with these new responsibilities who demonstrates they are ready to stretch themselves in the interest of the library will provide better reassurance in times of uncertainty”<sup>45</sup> for the entire staff and the senior administration. It became necessary to use compassion and empathy to step in and lead. But at the same time the interim director needed to take care of her own emotions, vulnerabilities, and insecurities. In this context, more than ever, showing vulnerability helped validate the interim role, and it was essential to learning how to lead with “mind, heart, gut and soul.”<sup>46</sup>

Any expertise derived from interim leadership comes from experience. There are few if any other guidelines to follow for similar circumstances, but reflecting on the experience and reviewing the professional literature have helped to make sense of the experience from which others may also be able to learn. Reflecting on and writing about the experience could be helpful to others in the same or similar situations. Many people left the profession unexpectedly during the pandemic; some for personal reasons, others for health reasons.

In the future, it is likely there will be additional sudden disruptions in the workplace, and those interim leaders may find this case study to be helpful.

We still have to find a way to honor our former head librarian, but her memory is still very much alive in everything the library does because she built most of it. The library has become a thriving part of the university thanks to what she created, and even the staff members who had different opinions on operational matters now often refer to what she wanted for the library and how she wanted it to be accomplished. Her legacy is the simple fact that the library exists.

## Notes

1. John E. Chapman, Judy J. Chapman, and John O. Lostetter, "The Acting or Interim Leadership Position: Expectations, Perceptions, Realities," *Health Care Management Review* 13, no. 4 (1988): 81–88; Norm Medeiros, "Training Ground: The Role of Interim Library Director," *OCLC Systems and Services: International Digital Library Perspectives* 26, no. 3 (2010): 153–55, <https://doi.org/10.1108/10650751011073580>; Pat A. Newcombe and James M. Donovan, "Becoming Director: An Internal Candidate's View," *Library Management* 34, no. 3 (2013): 188–99, <https://doi.org/10.1108/01435121311310888>.
2. Kathy M. Irwin and Susann deVries, "Experiences of Academic Librarians Serving as Interim Library Leaders," *College and Research Libraries* 80, no. 2 (2019): 238, <https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.80.2.238>.
3. Maggie Farrell, "Interim Leadership," *Journal of Library Administration* 56, no. 8 (2016): 990–1000, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01930826.2016.1231547>; Paul J. Kobulnicky, "Between the Acts: The Interim or Acting Director of a Research Library," *Journal of Library Administration* 24, no. 3 (1997): 3–29; Sandra J. Weingart, "Costs and Benefits of Interim Managerial Assignments in an Academic Library," *Library Management* 24, no. 4/5 (2003): 237–42, <https://doi.org/10.1108/01435120310475338>; Cynthia J. Boyle et al., "The Influence of Interim Deans: More Than Keeping the Ship Afloat and Warming the Captain's Seat," *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education* 80, no. 7 (2016), <https://doi.org/10.5688/ajpe807112>; Farrell, "Interim Leadership"; Cynthia L. Fountaine, "Stepping In: The Unique Challenges Faced by Interim Law Deans," *University of Toledo Law Review* 40 (2009): 343–55; Kobulnicky, "Between the Acts"; Gail Munde, "My Year as Interim," *College and Research Libraries News* 61, no. 5 (2000): 416–17, 420, <https://doi.org/10.5860/crln.61.5.416>; Weingart, "Costs and Benefits."
4. Munde, "My Year as Interim," 417.
5. Farrell, "Interim Leadership"; Munde, "My Year as Interim"; Eric Shoaf, "Suddenly Directing: An Interview with Florence Doksanaky," *Library Administration and Management* 19, no. 3 (2005): 116–18; Mark Stover, "From Reference Librarian to Interim Dean: A Journey of Comparisons and Contrasts," *Reference and User Services Quarterly* 50, no. 4 (2011): 322–24.
6. Tom Bielavitz, Dawn Lowe-Wincentsen, and Kim Read, "In the Interim: Leadership Shorts from Three Interim Library Directors," *PNLA Quarterly* 82, no. 2 (2018): 26–30; Fountaine, "Stepping In"; Rochelle Logan, "Executive Transitions: My Time as an Interim Director," *Public Libraries* 53, no. 6 (November/December 2014): 17–19; Medeiros, "Training Ground."
7. Catherine J. Matthews, "Becoming a Chief Librarian: An Analysis of Transition Stages in Academic Library Leadership," *Library Trends* 50, no. 4 (Spring 2002): 578–602.
8. Sandra Shell, "My Experience as a Bridge," *Virginia Libraries* 57, no. 2 (2011): 17, <https://doi.org/10.21061/valib.v57i2.1157>.
9. Neil Thompson, *Loss, Grief and Trauma in the Workplace* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 125.
10. Thompson, *Loss, Grief and Trauma*, 132.
11. Boyle et al., "Influence of Interim Deans"; Kobulnicky, "Between the Acts"; Munde, "My Year as Interim"; Shoaf, "Suddenly Directing."
12. Bielavitz, Lowe-Wincentsen, and Read, "In the Interim"; Farrell, "Interim Leadership"; Kobulnicky, "Between the Acts"; Elisa F. Topper, "Dealing with Death of an Employee," *New Library World* 109, no. 11/12 (2008): 584–86, <https://doi.org/10.1108/03074800810921386>.

13. Lynn Chmelir, "Here Today, Gone Tomorrow: Observations of an Interim Academic Library Director," *OLA Quarterly* 18, no. 1 (2012): 6–7, <https://doi.org/10.7710/1093-7374.1346>; Medeiros, "Training Ground"; Munde, "My Year as Interim"; Shell, "My Experience as a Bridge"; Shoaf, "Suddenly Directing."
14. Bielavitz, Lowe-Wincentsen, and Read, "In the Interim"; Rebecca Knight, "How to Step in as an Interim Manager," *Harvard Business Review*, March 1, 2021, <https://hbr.org/2021/03/how-to-step-in-as-an-interim-manager>; Christine H. Mooney, Matthew Semadeni, and Idalene F. Kesner, "Interim Succession: Temporary Leadership in the Midst of the Perfect Storm," *Business Horizons* 56, no. 5 (2013): 621–33; Weingart, "Costs and Benefits," 238.
15. Fountaine, "Stepping In," 347.
16. Claire-Lise Benaud and David G. Null, "Acting Positions: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly," *College and Research Libraries News* 52, no. 1 (1991): 30–33, <https://doi.org/10.5860/crln.52.1.30>; Boyle et al., "Influence of Interim Deans"; Farrell, "Interim Leadership"; Logan, "My Time as an Interim Director"; Gregory MacAyeal and Marianne Ryan, "Surviving and Thriving in an Acting Leadership Position," *Reference and User Services Quarterly* 56, no. 4 (2017): 228–31; Shell, "My Experience as a Bridge."
17. MacAyeal and Ryan, "Surviving and Thriving," 228.
18. Kobulnicky, "Between the Acts," 6.
19. Farrell, "Interim Leadership"; Logan, "My Time as an Interim Director."
20. Deborah Ancona et al., "In Praise of the Incomplete Leader," *Harvard Business Review*, February 1, 2007, <https://hbr.org/2007/02/in-praise-of-the-incomplete-leader>.
21. Farrell, "Interim Leadership"; Kobulnicky, "Between the Acts."
22. Quinn Galbraith, Sarah Smith, and Ben Walker, "A Case for Succession Planning: How Academic Libraries Are Responding to the Need to Prepare Future Leaders," *Library Management* 33, no. 4/5 (2012): 222, <https://doi.org/10.1108/01435121211242272>.
23. Paula M. Singer and Gail Griffith, *Succession Planning in the Library* (Chicago: American Library Association, 2010), 1.
24. Gabrielle K. W. Wong, "A Tool for Academic Libraries to Prioritize Leadership Competencies," *College and Research Libraries* 80, no. 5 (July 2019): 599, <https://crl.acrl.org/index.php/crl/article/view/18156>.
25. Topper, "Dealing with Death of an Employee."
26. Sian Brannon et al., "Managing Sudden Loss," *Journal of Library Administration* 59, no. 1 (2019): 88, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01930826.2018.1549413>.
27. Fountaine, "Stepping In," 347.
28. Topper, "Dealing with Death of an Employee."
29. Brannon et al., "Managing Sudden Loss," 89.
30. Brené Brown, *Dare to Lead* (New York: Random House, 2018), 19.
31. Jason Martin, "Daring Librarianship: What Library Leaders Can Learn from Brené Brown," *College and Research Libraries News* 81, no. 2 (2020): 87, <https://doi.org/10.5860/crln.81.2.87>.
32. Jason Martin, "Emotional Intelligence, Emotional Culture, and Library Leadership," *Library Leadership and Management* 33, no. 2 (2019): 2, <https://doi.org/10.5860/llm.v33i2.7329>.
33. Martin, "Emotional Intelligence," 3.
34. Arielle Dance, "Working Through the Death of a Colleague," *Harvard Business Review*, November 5, 2020, <https://hbr.org/2020/11/working-through-the-death-of-a-colleague>.
35. Dance, "Working Through."
36. MacAyeal and Ryan, "Surviving and Thriving," 230.
37. MacAyeal and Ryan, "Surviving and Thriving," 230.
38. Anna Ranieri, "How to Handle Shared Grief at Work," *Harvard Business Review*, May 26, 2015, <https://hbr.org/2015/05/how-to-handle-shared-grief-at-work>.
39. Diane Klare, "The Accidental Director: Critical Skills in Library Leadership," *Library Leadership and Management* 31, no. 2 (2017): 4, <https://journals.tdl.org/llm/index.php/llm/article/viewFile/7191/6407>.
40. Boyle et al., "Influence of Interim Deans"; Farrell, "Interim Leadership"; Kobulnicky, "Between the Acts"; Logan, "My Time as an Interim Director."
41. Kobulnicky, "Between the Acts," 12.
42. Xan Goodman, Susan Wainscott, and Samantha Godbey, "Grief in the Library: Coping with the Loss of a Colleague," *College and Research Libraries News* 77, no. 4 (2016): 202–3, <https://doi.org/10.5860/crln.77.4.9481>.

43. Nita Lawton-Misra and Tyrone Pretorius, "Leading with Heart: Academic Leadership during the COVID-19 Crisis," *South African Journal of Psychology* 51, no. 2 (2021): 207, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0081246321992979>.
44. Lawton-Misra and Pretorius, "Leading with Heart," 208.
45. Klare, "Accidental Director," 4.
46. Lawton-Misra and Pretorius, "Leading with Heart," 209.

## Bibliography

- Ancona, Deborah, Thomas W. Malone, Wanda J. Orlikowski, and Peter M. Senge. "In Praise of the Incomplete Leader." *Harvard Business Review*, February 2007. <https://hbr.org/2007/02/in-praise-of-the-incomplete-leader>.
- Benaud, Claire-Lise, and David G. Null. "Acting Positions: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly." *College and Research Libraries News* 52, no. 1 (1991): 30–33. <https://doi.org/10.5860/crln.52.1.30>.
- Bielavitz, Tom, Dawn Lowe-Wincentsen, and Kim Read. "In the Interim: Leadership Shorts from Three Interim Library Directors." *PNLA Quarterly* 82, no. 2 (2018): 26–30.
- Boyle, Cynthia J., Renae Chesnut, Michael D. Hogue, and David P. Zgarrick. "The Influence of Interim Deans: More Than Keeping the Ship Afloat and Warming the Captain's Seat." *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education* 80, no. 7 (2016). <https://doi.org/10.5688/ajpe807112>.
- Brannon Sian, Kevin Yanowski, Taylor Evans, and Julie Leuzinger. "Managing Sudden Loss." *Journal of Library Administration* 59, no. 1 (2019): 86–96. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01930826.2018.1549413>.
- Brown, Brené. *Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts*. New York: Random House, 2018.
- Chapman, John E., Judy J. Chapman, and John O. Lostetter. "The Acting or Interim Leadership Position: Expectations, Perceptions, Realities." *Health Care Management Review* 13, no. 4 (1988): 81–88.
- Chmelir, Lynn. "Here Today, Gone Tomorrow: Observations of an Interim Academic Library Director." *OLA Quarterly* 18, no. 1 (2012): 6–7. <https://doi.org/10.7710/1093-7374.1346>.
- Dance, Arielle. "Working Through the Death of a Colleague." *Harvard Business Review*, November 5, 2020. <https://hbr.org/2020/11/working-through-the-death-of-a-colleague>.
- Farrell, Maggie. "Interim Leadership." *Journal of Library Administration* 56, no. 8 (2016): 990–1000. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01930826.2016.1231547>.
- Fountain, Cynthia L. "Stepping In: The Unique Challenges Faced by Interim Law Deans." *University of Toledo Law Review* 40 (2009): 343–55.
- Galbraith, Quinn, Sarah Smith, and Ben Walker. "A Case for Succession Planning: How Academic Libraries Are Responding to the Need to Prepare Future Leaders." *Library Management* 33, no. 4/5 (2012): 221–40. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01435121211242272>.
- Goodman, Xan, Susan Wainscott, and Samantha Godbey. "Grief in the Library: Coping with the Loss of a Colleague." *College and Research Libraries News* 77, no. 4 (2016): 202–3. <https://doi.org/10.5860/crln.77.4.9481>.
- Irwin, Kathy M., and Susann deVries. "Experiences of Academic Librarians Serving as Interim Library Leaders." *College and Research Libraries* 80, no. 2 (2019): 238–59. <https://doi.org/10.5860/crl.80.2.238>.
- Klare, Diane. "The Accidental Director: Critical Skills in Library Leadership." *Library Leadership and Management* 31, no. 2 (2017). <https://journals.tdl.org/llm/index.php/llm/article/viewFile/7191/6407>.
- Knight, Rebecca. "How to Step In as an Interim Manager." *Harvard Business Review*, March 1, 2021. <https://hbr.org/2021/03/how-to-step-in-as-an-interim-manager>.
- Kobulnicky, Paul J. "Between the Acts: The Interim or Acting Director of a Research Library." *Journal of Library Administration* 24, no. 3 (1997): 3–29.
- Lawton-Misra, Nita, and Tyrone Pretorius. "Leading with Heart: Academic Leadership during the COVID-19 Crisis." *South African Journal of Psychology* 51, no. 2 (2021): 205–14. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0081246321992979>.
- Logan, Rochelle. "Executive Transitions: My Time as an Interim Director." *Public Libraries* 53, no. 6 (November/December 2014): 17–19.
- MacAyeal, Gregory, and Marianne Ryan. "Surviving and Thriving in an Acting Leadership Position." *Reference and User Services Quarterly* 56, no. 4 (2017): 228–31.

- Martin, Jason. "Daring Librarianship: What Library Leaders Can Learn from Brené Brown." *College and Research Libraries News* 81, no. 2 (2020): 87–89. <https://doi.org/10.5860/crln.81.2.87>.
- . "Emotional Intelligence, Emotional Culture, and Library Leadership." *Library Leadership and Management* 33, no. 2 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.5860/llm.v33i2.7329>.
- Matthews, Catherine J. "Becoming a Chief Librarian: An Analysis of Transition Stages in Academic Library Leadership." *Library Trends* 50, no. 4 (Spring 2002): 578–602.
- Medeiros, Norm. "Training Ground: The Role of Interim Library Director." *OCLC Systems and Services: International Digital Library Perspectives* 26, no. 3 (2010): 153–55. <https://doi.org/10.1108/10650751011073580>.
- Mooney, Christine H., Matthew Semadeni, and Idalene F. Kesner. "Interim Succession: Temporary Leadership in the Midst of the Perfect Storm." *Business Horizons* 56, no. 5 (2013): 621–33.
- Munde, Gail. "My Year as Interim." *College and Research Libraries News* 61, no. 5 (2000): 416–17, 420. <https://doi.org/10.5860/crln.61.5.416>.
- Newcombe, Pat A., and James M. Donovan. "Becoming Director: An Internal Candidate's View." *Library Management* 34, no. 3 (2013): 188–99. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01435121311310888>.
- Ranieri, Anna. "How to Handle Shared Grief at Work." *Harvard Business Review*, May 26, 2015. <https://hbr.org/2015/05/how-to-handle-shared-grief-at-work>.
- Shell, Sandra. "My Experience as a Bridge." *Virginia Libraries* 57, no. 2 (2011). <https://doi.org/10.21061/valib.v57i2.1157>.
- Shoaf, Eric. "Suddenly Directing: An Interview with Florence Doksansky." *Library Administration and Management* 19, no. 3 (2005): 116–18.
- Singer, Paula M., and Gail Griffith. *Succession Planning in the Library: Developing Leaders, Managing Change*. Chicago: American Library Association, 2010.
- Stover, Mark. "From Reference Librarian to Interim Dean: A Journey of Comparisons and Contrasts." *Reference and User Services Quarterly* 50, no. 4 (2011): 322–24.
- Thompson, Neil. *Loss, Grief and Trauma in the Workplace*. New York: Routledge, 2017.
- Topper, Elisa F. "Dealing with Death of an Employee." *New Library World* 109, no. 11/12 (2008): 584–86. <https://doi.org/10.1108/03074800810921386>.
- Weingart, Sandra J. "Costs and Benefits of Interim Managerial Assignments in an Academic Library." *Library Management* 24, no. 4/5 (2003): 237–42. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01435120310475338>.
- Wong, Gabrielle K. W. "A Tool for Academic Libraries to Prioritize Leadership Competencies." *College and Research Libraries* 80, no. 5 (July 2019): 597–617. <https://crl.acrl.org/index.php/crl/article/view/18156>.