



Am I ready for this?

Reflections from an Early Career Librarian in their First Year of Management in 2020

Welcome and thank you for attending today's session!

My name is Carla Lewis (she/her)

Learning Support Librarian & Learning Commons Manager at University of Calgary

carla.lewis1@ucalgary.ca



Overview of Session

- ◎ Approach to the Session
- ◎ Background: Arriving to UCalgary
- ◎ Servant Leadership – What is it and how does it apply?
- ◎ The Team
- ◎ 2020: Adapting to Budget Cuts & COVID
- ◎ My Reflections
- ◎ Questions & Comments



“

Humans are not ideally set up to understand logic; they are ideally set up to understand stories.

— Roger C. Schank, cognitive scientist



1.

Background: Arriving to UCalgary

How did it start?

My path so far...



2013 BEd
2015 LIT Diploma
2017 MLIS



**UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
BOTANIC GARDEN**

2016-2017
Plants Record Manager



**UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
LIBRARY**

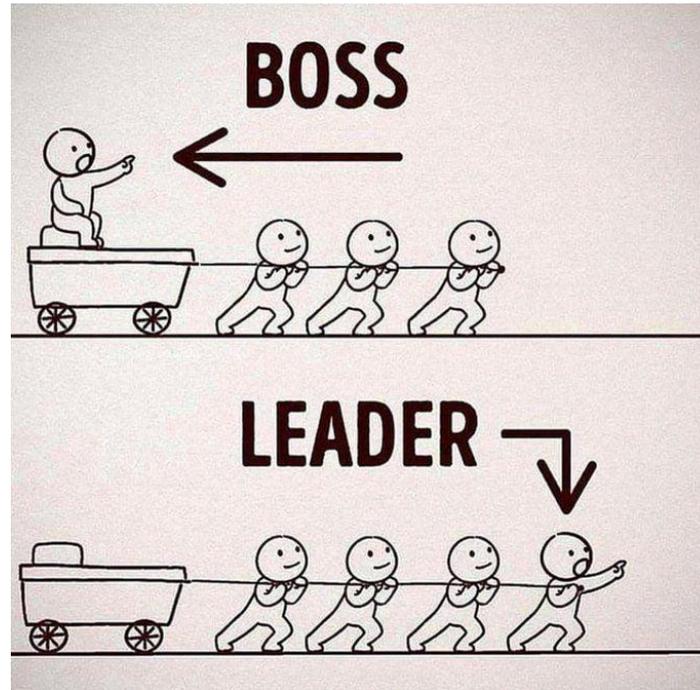
2017-2019
Teaching & Learning Librarian



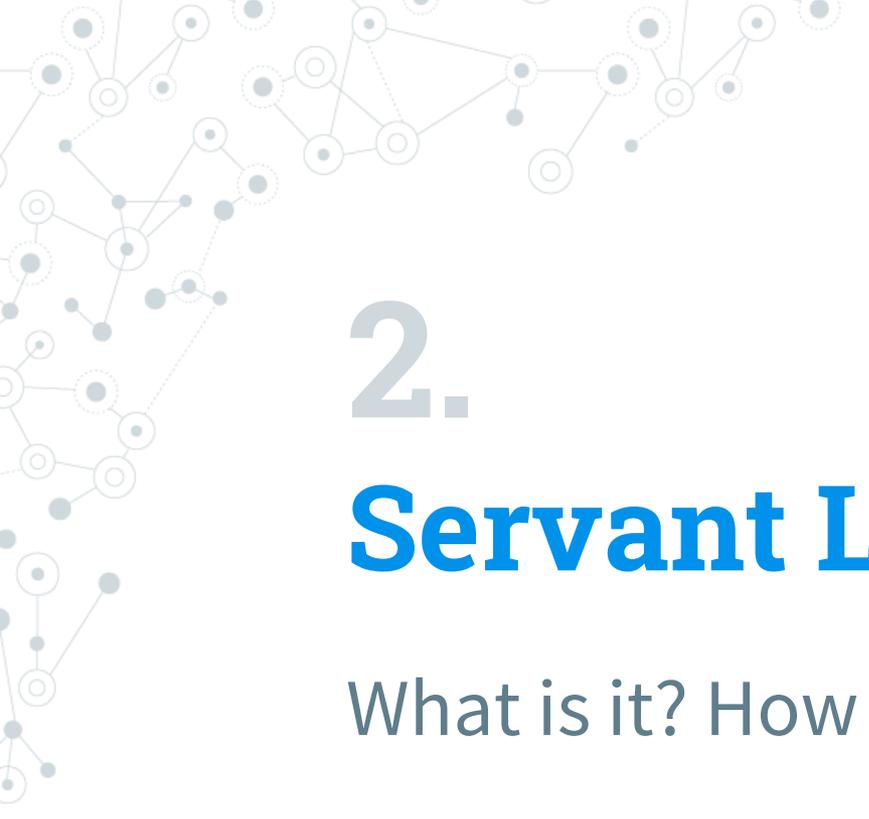
**UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY**

Started July 8, 2019

First exposure to Management and Leadership



Random. (2020, August 2). *Boss vs. leader*. 9GAG. Retrieved February 18, 2021, from <https://9gag.com/gag/aD42PB7>

A decorative network diagram in the top-left corner, consisting of various sized grey circles connected by thin grey lines, some with dashed outlines.

2.

Servant Leadership

What is it? How does it apply?



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The Servant-Leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant – first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served.

Characteristics of Servant Leadership (Spears, 1995)

- ◎ Listening
- ◎ Empathy
 - Emotional Intelligence
- ◎ Healing
- ◎ Awareness
- ◎ Persuasion
- ◎ Conceptualization
- ◎ Foresight
- ◎ Stewardship
- ◎ Commitment to the Growth of People
- ◎ Community Building

How does Servant Leadership apply to the library context?

- ◎ Reframing failure and setbacks as learning opportunities and opportunities to enhance/streamline processes (Moniz, 2010)
 - Leader mood & stress will impact team
 - Admit mistakes and failures; don't cover up

How does Servant Leadership apply to the library context?

- ◎ “It is the idea that unites people in the common effort, not the charisma of the leader” (Greenleaf, 1998)
 - Find ways to connect staff personal work goals to the library’s strategic plan and projects
 - ◎ Capitalizing on the knowledge and strength of the team
 - ◎ Team and individual investment

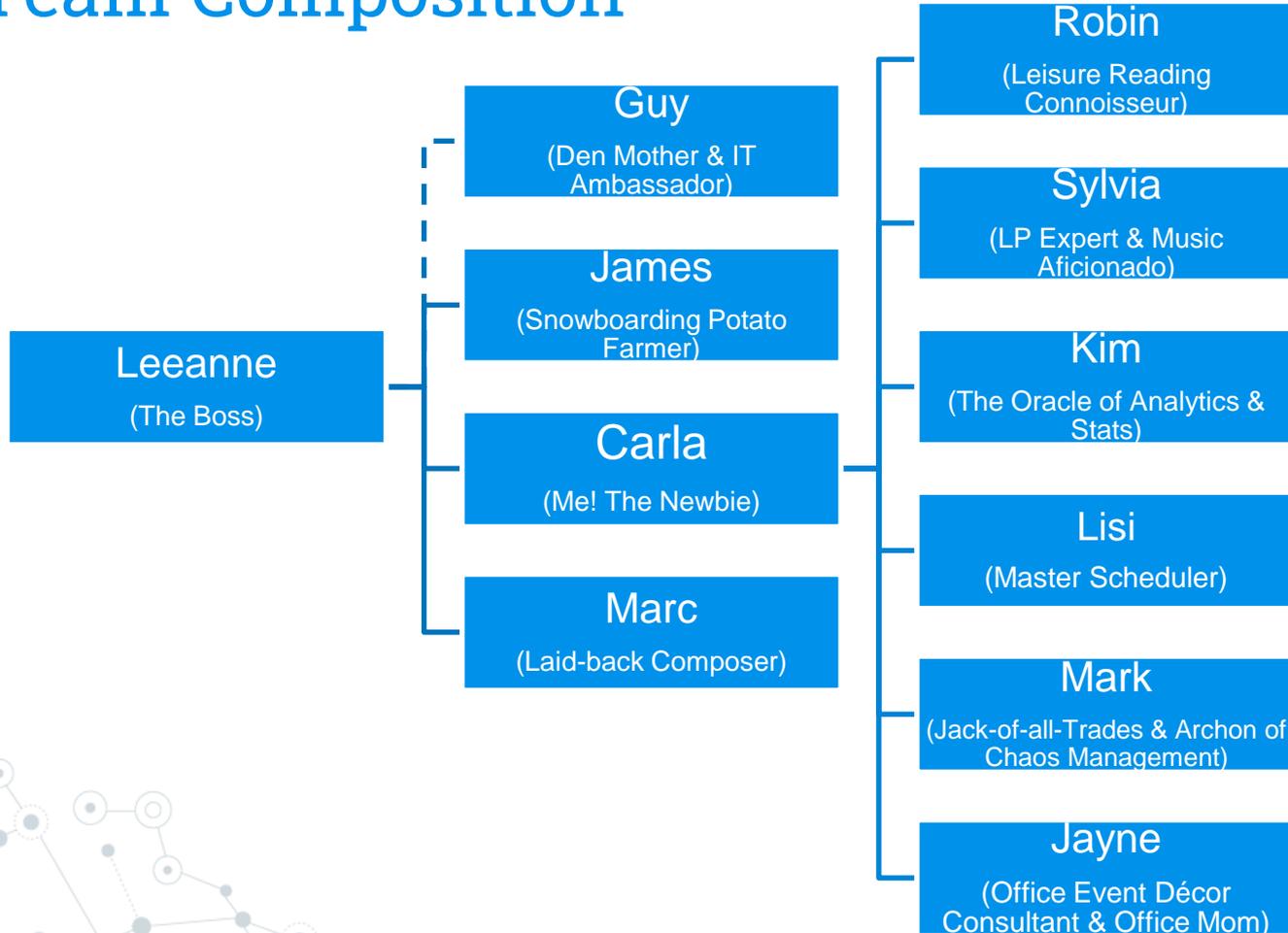
How does Servant Leadership apply to the library context?

- ◎ Social competency is integral (Moniz, 2010)
 - Focus on relationship building
 - Library users, staff, faculty, departments, community
- ◎ Service learning and experiential learning (Greenleaf, 1998)
- ◎ “Treat people with dignity/respect” (Hernon & Rossiter, 2006, as cited in Moniz, 2010)

A decorative network diagram in the top-left corner, consisting of various sized grey circles (nodes) connected by thin grey lines (edges). Some nodes are solid grey, while others are hollow with a grey outline. The network is dense and irregular, extending from the top-left towards the center of the slide.

3. **The Team**

Team Composition



Integrating into the Team

- ◎ Community Building
 - Out of Office Adventure Time
 - ◎ Mini golf, pottery painting, bocce tournaments
 - One-on-One Meetings
- ◎ Vulnerability & Trust
- ◎ Lead by example
 - “Guide on the Side” not “Sage on the Stage”
 - Participate in staff training for projects



Integrating into the Team

- ◎ Empathy & Emotional Intelligence
 - Listening
 - Making space and time
- ◎ Motivation
 - Projects
 - Practicum Students



What makes this team great?

- ◎ Willingness to share & story tell
 - Institutional knowledge
 - Literally taught me everything I know
- ◎ Adaptability and Flexibility
 - Jump in where needed
 - Eager to take on new tasks
- ◎ Connection is key
 - We are a work family





4.

The year was 2020...

Budget Cuts & Pandemics
& Lots of Changes

Timeline of Events

Jul 2019
Starting UCalgary



Jan 2020
Layoffs



May 2020
Voluntary Retirements



Mar 2021
Now



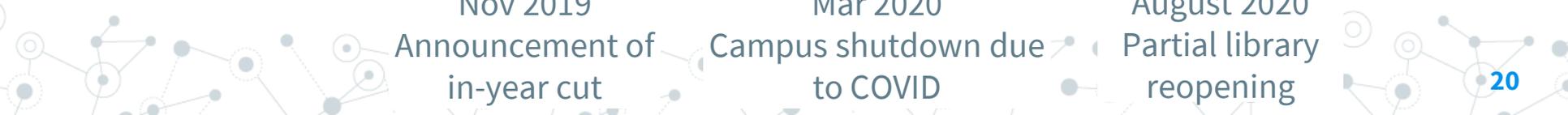
Nov 2019
Announcement of
in-year cut



Mar 2020
Campus shutdown due
to COVID



August 2020
Partial library
reopening





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For Greenleaf, one way to avoid losing our way is...through both internal reflection and by listening to and in some sense being grounded by one's staff.

(Moniz, 2010)

My reflections

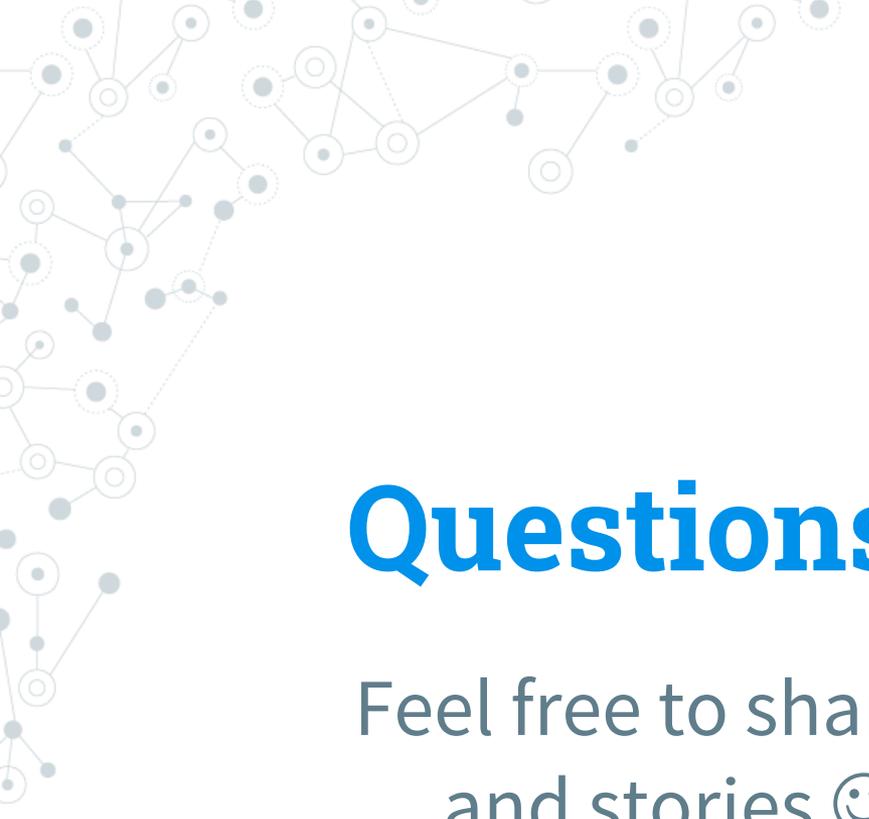
- ◎ The time and effort spent developing relationships with your team pay off
 - Team solidarity in tough times
 - Willingness to pitch-in
- ◎ When there is a problem:
 - Come forward with the issue
 - Also have 2 or 3 possible solutions
 - You can't solve everything on your own

My reflections

- ◎ “Did anyone die? Did we lose money? Is building intact?”
 - Will it matter a 100 years from now?
 - Put things into perspective
- ◎ Partial open-door policy
- ◎ Previous managers and supervisors played a significant role in shaping my perspectives on leadership

My reflections

- ◎ Find ways and time to decompress and reflect
- ◎ Remember to be selfful
- ◎ Listen to the little voice inside; don't doubt it
- ◎ Regular and honest communication



Questions? Comments?

Feel free to share your experiences
and stories 😊

References

Andersen, J. A. (2009). When a servant-leader comes knocking. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 30(1), 4-15. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730910927070>

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