

President's Update - August 14, 2014

Former Tonight Show host Johnny Carson once said "Talent alone won't make you a success. Neither will being in the right place at the right time, unless you are ready. The most important question is: 'Are you ready?'

That's the question that we, as librarians, need to ask ourselves every day.

Are we ready to push ourselves to the next level, so that we can better serve our communities?

Are we ready to perform in new and creative ways?

Are we ready... to tango?

This year, at the President's Reception of MLA Annual, we will be raising money for the MLA Scholarship Fund. And, on a lighter note, we will be learning to tango.

As your president, I have been working on that particular skill myself. If you'd like to see the results of my efforts, come to the Presidents Reception at MLA annual.

That is what MLA is all about; not tango, but developing our skills. To that end, we've got a fantastic slate of programs and networking opportunities ready for you, especially at our MLA Annual Meeting taking place in Grand Rapids, October 15-17. Early bird registration ends August 29th, so please take advantage of our discounted rates.

As you approach development opportunities like MLA Annual, you will need to ask yourself: where does my motivation come from?

The best librarians I know are the ones that are constantly looking for gaps in their professional game. Such a gap can be remedied by training and feedback from everyone in librarianship, and helping others improve along the way. This particular mindset is intrinsic, or internal, motivation. This is an attitude that we all need to adopt: to engage in training not because it will serve our superiors and our organizations, but it will serve us as individuals. It will make our lives easier and brighter, because it will make us more effective professionals.

Research has shown such motivation leads to much more effective outcomes than extrinsic motivation, which is motivation that comes from outside yourself. For example, are you attending a training only because a superior feels you should? If so, you are less likely to learn or make use of it. If you learn based on your own motivations, you are sure to learn more, and in turn become more skilled. That is the first and only step to make you more effective in developing yourself.

This is a simplified way of looking at professional development. Nonetheless, it is true.

I don't know if I will ever be a speaker like Johnny Carson. I don't know if I'll learn the tango. But I do know that MLA has helped, and will all of us, reach new heights we never thought possible

Let's make it an outstanding day!

- Asante

[Back to news](#)