The Librarian’s Guide to Negotiation: Winning Strategies for the Digital Age by Beth Ashmore, Jill E. Grogg, Jeff Weddle (review)

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Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science, Volume 37, Number 1, March/mars 2013, pp. R2-R3 (Review)

Published by University of Toronto Press

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1353/ils.2013.0000

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to Grow will be useful to students in academic MLS programs and researchers with an interest in Canadian social history and public policy: It fills a gap in the library literature by addressing the history of public libraries from a regional and organizational, rather than strictly social, perspective. The book is accessible to non-historians, and readers will find many parallels to contemporary issues in the administration of public libraries in Ontario and elsewhere in Canada.

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*The Librarian’s Guide to Negotiation* begins with two key premises. The first is that negotiation is a basic job function for all twenty-first-century information managers, particularly for those dealing with digital content and services, but also for those in other areas of public and technical services. The second is that negotiating can be intimidating and that few library and information science (LIS) programs explicitly address negotiation skills in their curriculum, so few graduates feel prepared to negotiate effectively. As a result, many information managers equate negotiation with conflict rather than seeing it as a necessary form of communications, and thus seek to avoid it.

This new publication seeks to demystify key negotiation skills and does so in a sequence of nine clearly written and engaging chapters that focus on practical topics such as the power and pitfalls of consortial negotiations, strategies for negotiating in the era of publisher consolidation and the “Big Deal” and for negotiating in the age of open access, and open source and free internet resources. In addition, five appendices include useful supplementary information such as tips on how to research a forthcoming negotiation, an annotated bibliography of useful resources, sample licensing and negotiation checklists, a brief overview of digital tools and their impact on negotiation communications and strategy, and a brief overview of communication theory.

While many of the examples provided relate specifically to aspects of acquisitions and collections management, the negotiation principles outlined by the authors are broadly applicable to other types of negotiations as well and could be used when negotiating with funding agencies, staff, co-workers, and administrators. The authors clearly explain the differences between interest-based and positional negotiation strategies and give practical advice about when to use each approach. They also tackle the controversial issue of the role of gender in negotiations and, while they do not reach a definitive conclusion, raise some provocative questions. Most importantly, the authors emphasize the importance of preparation and research before negotiations are begun and provide many practical examples of effective preparation that can be applied to any negotiation scenario.
This pragmatic, readable, and frequently humourous guide will be of interest to practitioners in any library or information environment. It will also be a valuable resource to LIS educators who wish to include a discussion of negotiation strategies in collections management or organizational management classes.

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Associate professor Martin Frické’s thesis is, “Make greater use of Symbolic Logic. It can bring a unification and improvement to organization” (p. 18). According to his faculty Web page, logic and librarianship has been one of his research interests since 1990. In chapter 1, he explains why librarianship needs logic: A massive amount of digital information exists, and existing approaches to organization and retrieval cannot meet users’ needs. Using symbolic logic, computers can aid, but not replace, librarians with cataloguing; computers cannot understand natural language or semantically categorize things.

Chapter 2 introduces a technical discussion of data structures and algorithms. In chapter 3, Frické explores catalogues, inventories, and encyclopedias, citing Plato, Aristotle, Francis Bacon, and others. Chapter 4 provides a cogent argument: Existing library systems use logic. He then states, “The logic we need is First Order Predicate Calculus” (p. 122), and refers readers to the appendix for an introduction to First Order Predicate Calculus. Without requisite knowledge, this appendix is challenging. Regardless, he assumes readers’ understanding of the topic as he demonstrates the use of symbolic logic for classification. Chapter 5 reviews Aristotelian hierarchies, facet analysis, and other familiar classification staples. Chapter 6 discusses topic annotation techniques such as subject headings or thesauri, but he states, “[W]e favor ordinary First Order Predicate Logic as the artificial language of topics” (p. 197). Chapter 7 provides an overview of human and automated indexing, and chapter 8 skims current information organization trends such as Dublin Core, FRBR, and the Semantic Web. Chapter 9 summarizes his belief in the value of logic for aiding classification efforts as well as overcoming traditional retrieval challenges such as homonyms and synonyms.

As a scholar with classification and technology expertise, I found this book difficult to process. It is therefore difficult for me to imagine that the book would be well-received by students and practitioners, which are the target audiences for this volume, according to Springer’s website. Although the book introduces concepts that are taught in introductory information organization courses, symbolic logic is the focus. In addition, it is unclear how librarians would move logic from conceptualization to implementation, especially since most librarians have little control over the classification and retrieval systems that are used in