

# Book Reviews — Monographic Musings

Column Editor: **Debbie Vaughn** (College of Charleston) <vaughnd@cofc.edu>

**Column Editor's Note:** *Though Boss's Day is only observed once a year, it is always appropriate to address one's management skills through personal and professional development. Regular reviewer Wm. Joseph Thomas offers his opinion on **Library Management Tips that Work** as well as suggestions for other library management titles worth pursuing. Many thanks to Joseph for his contribution, and happy reading, everyone! — DV*

**Smallwood, Carol**, ed. *Library Management Tips that Work*, ed. Chicago: ALA, 2011. 978-0-8389-1121-1. 208 pages. \$55.00.

Reviewed by **Wm. Joseph Thomas** (Head of Collection Development, Joyner Library, East Carolina University) <thomasw@ecu.edu>

**Carol Smallwood's** latest book aims to provide "concise how-to case studies of successful managers employing innovation." *Library Management Tips that Work* partially meets this goal. Forty-eight bite-sized chapters are divided into five parts: The Manager Role, Running a Library, Information Technology, Staff, and Public Relations. Thirty contributors from a variety of backgrounds provide two chapters each, with an average of three pages per chapter. Some of the pairs of contributions are more closely related than others — for instance, the two chapters on time management, the two on avoiding discrimination, or the two

on planning for emergencies. Others, though, are only loosely related, and some do not seem to be related at all.

The chapters that work best are those that are generally applicable to any library type; these also display several themes present throughout the book: clear communication, documentation, planning, and partnership, are all necessities for library leaders. The Information Technology chapters share timely tips on deploying technology for library purposes; for example, the noteworthy "Why a Wiki? How Wikis Help Get Work Done" lays out helpful examples on how to choose wiki software, how

libraries are already using them, and how to prevent wiki "fade-away." While the sections on The Manager Role and on Staff are decidedly useful in a variety of settings, the section on Public Relations really only addresses public library directors and their boards.

Many of the chapters have helpful call-outs, and some have figures, appendices, and/or references. One handy bit of advice that emerged from a call-out was the suggestion to have "manager handbooks" to ensure consistency in policies and manager actions in order to avoid discriminatory practices. This book, as another reviewer points out, is perhaps best suited for directors of small public libraries. Overall, though, *Library Management Tips that Work* is uneven. Library managers looking for practical strategies to implement in their own libraries can find them on the Web or in other published literature. For a stronger general introduction to management issues and techniques, there are other books like *Be a Great Boss: One Year to Success or Managing Library Employees: A How-to-do-it Manual*. 