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Making Space for Informal Learning

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Informal Learning occurs naturally and does not need a particular setting or mindset to happen. In Academic Libraries, not only do students learn informally but librarians also have opportunities to gain knowledge from each other through spontaneous conversations and happenstance. The key to taking advantage of informal learning moments is to be aware enough to recognize that they have occurred and take note of them and their effect.

As Academic libraries appear to become less devoted to building dedicated Academic learning environments and desire ongoing connections to students, there are even more openings for informal learning moments. Makerspaces, common areas, and events allow for time to teach and learn when it is least expected but can also be most impactful.

In his Atlas of New Librarianship, R. David Lankes stated, "The mission of librarians is to improve society through facilitating knowledge creation in their communities." Informal learning has also been associated with learning through knowledge creation so it is central to what librarians need to understand and integrate now and in the future.