

ICT Skills for LIS Professional in the Digital Environment

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ABSTRACT

Libraries are growing emphasis on use of information technologies have undergone major structural changes in terms of their collections, organizations and services. As the changes occurred in library environment the library and information science professionals should be acquaintance with different skills. In the Digital age need stronger Technological type of librarianship. This paper emphasizes that acquisition of new sets of skills required by library professionals for survive in this technological based environment.

Keywords: ICT Skills for Library Professionals, Professional Competencies

1. INTRODUCTION

At present the education system is instead of going teaching will be promotes by creative, self learning and informal with focus on values, merits and quality. Technologies have created a new services environment that has pushed boundaries much farther with the calculated risk and opportunities. Traditional libraries are changing to digital libraries and new libraries that are being set up are increasingly of the digital kind. There is a significant role of ICT in LIS environment. It makes dramatic changes in the system and services of the LIS

profession. Professionals working in such libraries need continuous growing by acquiring core competencies and new skills so that they never become obsolete in this fast changing environment.

2. Library Professional in Electronic Library Environment

The rapid development of information technology and communication system has brought a revolutionary change in the organization and management of information. The libraries are facing new challenges, new competitions, new demands, new expectations and a variety of information services form users. For working in the borderless digital library environment, the library professionals gaining knowledge in library and information science application in library operations and services both in theoretical as well as practical level. He must be keep him up to date with the latest technological changes in general and its application in library operations in particular.

In a digital web environment the librarian gets the opportunity to search different web sites, e-journals etc as well as to share ideas among the same professions groups using e-mails, audio/ video conference etc. moreover he must be an alert user newly developed hardware as well as software required for a web based library.

3. Need for Competence and IT skills for LIS Professionals

LIS professionals are gaining knowledge need to acquire the IT skills for the library applications. Since the 21st century, libraries are facing serious transition on account of the following three main reasons:

- New forms of work organization such as user computing, work teams, downsizing, re-Engineering have directed bearing on this shift.
- The transition from paper to electronic media dominant from of information storage

Retrieval and dissemination. Convergence of different media, such as text graphics and

Sound into multimedia resources has direct impact on this transition.

- Increasing attention on accountability with focus on quality customer services performance measurement, bench marking and continuous improvement.

At present IT based environment has demanded new job requirements, new roles, adequate competence and different kinds of skills from the professionals which would help them to develop new product and services in response to new development.

In particular the need to better equip them with IT tools so that they handle the tasks more effective such:

- Jobs related to library operation
- Developing new and better strategies for information handling
- Access to information resources of other libraries
- Optimization of available resources
- Higher productivity in information management
- Information services to users

3.1 Professional Competencies

The following sections highlight the major professionals of new digital era

- Users appropriate information technology to acquire, organize and disseminate information
- Provide excellent instruction and support for library and information services
- Has expert knowledge of the content of information resources, including the ability to critically evaluate and filter them

- Develop specialized information products for the use inside or outside the organizations
- Evaluates the outcomes of information use and conducts research related to the solution of information management problems
- Assesses information needs and designs and markets value-added information services and products to meet identified needs
- Continually improves information services in response to the changing needs

3.2 Personal Competencies

- Has effective communication skills
- Committed to services excellence
- Creates an environment of mutual respect and trust
- Provide leadership
- Work well with others in a team
- Recognizes the values of professional networking and solidarity
- Committed to lifelong learning and personal career planning
- Seek out challenges and sees new opportunities both inside and outside the library

4. Soft skills for the LIS Professionals

LIS professional's soft skills are an important element of their individual contribution to the success of an organization. A librarian is a creator and promoter of information agent of social activities for the society.

Along with his work in the library and he should have the some of the soft skills:

- Customer service skills
- Leadership skills
- Writing skills
- Conceptual skill
- Teaching skills
- Public relation skills
- Communication skills

- Social skills

5. The LIS professionals required essentials IT skills

The following categories the most essential IT skills required LIS professionals are given:

5.1 Librarians need to be fluent

- Web site design skills
- Word processing skills
- Spread sheet skills
- Video conferencing
- Computer security skills
- E-mail management skills
- Scanner knowledge
- Electronic presentation skills
- Database skills

5.2 Knowledge about basic computer operations

- Management of network, networking architecture
- Knowledge of file, folder structure, file management
- printing setup, printing with standalone and networked environment
- Knowledge of computer network

5.3 Internet Skills

Internet is essential that every librarian and information manager should develop skills are

- Searching techniques tools
- URL and URL format
- Use of various browsers including internet explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Open Netscape etc.
- Internet its architecture, features, facilities etc
- Search engines like Yahoo, Google, AltaVista, Lycos, etc

5.4 Librarians should have knowledge on

- Network
- Software
- Hardware

5.4.1 Network

All library professionals should have basic knowledge about

- Network Hardware such as hub, switches, network interface card and data cables, topology of networks
- IP address
- Wireless networks
- Proxy server and basics
- DNS (Internal and External)
- ISDN
- NAT (Network Address Translation)
- VPN (Virtual Private Network)

5.4.2 Software

All the LIS professionals and Librarians should have knowledge on

- FTP (File Transfer Protocol)
- MS office products and other alternatives
- Firewall software
- Anti Virus Software
- Web designing software
- Telnet
- Multimedia Authorizing Tools

5.4.3 Hardware

All librarians and information managers have knowledge of computer hardware about

- CPU and its parts
- Printers and Projectors
- Barcode Scanner
- Pen Drives and Flash drives

6. Challenges for Library and Information Science Professionals

- Social networks in an information environment
- Mobile Technology and Virtual Worlds
- Virtual Libraries
- Latest Development in search Technology and how that impacts on the profession

- Use a range of tools to organize and tag information
- Changing user needs
- Impact of changes in the media and social networks on user expectations
- Major shifts in learning and some of the emerging information behaviors of the digital age
- Political and economic pressures on library services and the potential response

7. Conclusion

The new era Librarian will become the guardian of digital information and will be the vehicle to preserve democratic access to information. The evaluation, acquisition, organization, sharing and distribution of information in all formats, including books, periodicals, online services such as internal works product document and database resources in an integral part of works. Therefore adequate knowledge of IT and its application in libraries with a positive attitude can make the real difference between the real and desired situation. Hence all the professionals should be IT skilled persons.

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