

Competences and Skills for Librarian in the Electronic Era

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In the Era of Information Communication Technology, information plays a vital role in the growth of society. Today information is required in every aspect of life like railway reservation to the space technology. Those countries, who have the information, about other information, are dominating poor countries.

The invention and introduction of new communication technology in the field of communication has opened new opportunities in a bigger way in the information communication area. Besides this, the desktop/laptop computers which are available at an affordable price also make a great impact on access to information at home, office and during travelling.

With the help of Information technology and their new inventions in communication and Information, the technology changes the whole scenario. The new information and communication technology and Computers play a multifunctional role in information handling-information acquiring, creation, duplication, storage, access, distribution and preservation. The presentation has become more easy and possible accurate manner.

The Universe of knowledge has been growing extremely, due to the new technologies and the Internet. The role of the librarian has also changed from custodian of the materials to knowledge Manager, the knowledge disseminator. He/she is more depending upon new types of equipment and technologies i.e. Internet, e-resources like e-books, e-journals/magazines, e-database etc. The expectation from the librarian towards managing and disseminating the print and non-print material has been increased from society. The new printing technology

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and equipment to digitize the material makes a great impact on the growth of the universe of knowledge, every day millions of the webpages, e-resources have been published on the www web in various subjects. It is very difficult to know all of them and access them by the researcher or the needed persons within time.

In such a situation, the role of the librarian has become more important and crucial in terms of five laws of Library Science stated by Dr.S.R. Ranganathan. To access and to provide the right information to the right person at the right time is most important for the information professionals. Today, we have entered into the information age where easy availability and easy accessibility of information is the prime concerned due to the rapid development of the technology and electronic publishing in getting a tremendous impetus. e-report, e-journals, e-books, e-database etc. are some of the electronic information resources.

Competencies and Skills required for LIS Professionals:

What is a competency?

- Competencies refer to skills or knowledge that leads to superior performance.
- These are formed through an individual/organization's knowledge, skills and abilities and provide a framework for distinguishing between poor performances through to exceptional performance.
- Competencies can be applied at the organizational, individual, team, and occupational and functional levels.
- Competencies are individual abilities or characteristics that are key to effectiveness in work.
- Competencies are the characteristics of a manager that lead to the demonstration of skills and abilities, which result in effective performance within an organizational area.^{४९}

^{४९} (http://www.carltonglobal.com/samplelesson_HR.pdf) access on 01-01-2012.

What is meant by Skill :

- An ability and capacity acquired through deliberate, systematic, and sustained effort to smoothly and adaptively carryout complex activities or job functions involving ideas (cognitive skill, things (technical skills), and/or people (interpersonal skills). See also competence.^{୪୨}

Today in the age of information era the role of the librarian has been changed from the custodian to the preservation, organizer to disseminator of information of various forms from clay tablets to various electronic formats. S/He nowadays, recognized as an e-librarian, libraries are well recognized by ‘Cyber Library’ and librarian known as a Cybrarian.

Library and information professionals have been provided access to information to its clientele as per the five laws of Library Science stated by S.R. Ranganathan. and in the R & D organization in a proactive manner.

The information explosion has changed the entire information scenario in the world. The growth of the literature is so rapid that no one can control it. All the published literature can not be affordable by any library or it can not be possible to acquire all the published information in one library due to time, space and money constraint.

The role of a librarian in the electronic era is most significant. The role of the librarian remains the same as earlier they were doing manually as information gathering, storage, retrieval and dissemination but in this Electronic Era the ICT equipment like computer smooth the progress of an entire process in digital form or in the Electronic form. the process of the collection development and organization of knowledge, storages, preservation, archiving of knowledge and information retrieval are stored in 0 and 1 called binary code which is the key of successful implementation of digital library or electronic library, it is essential

^{୪୨} (<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/skill.html#ixzz3EMo4ZMC5>) access on 01-01-2012.

that LIS professionals are well trained and possess requisite knowledge and skills in this respect.

Competencies and Skills:

1. **Paradigm Shift:** We should always be aware of the about the new technologies (ICT) in our field, change and adopt new technologies, take the advantage of ICT and to provide better services to our users. e.g earlier computerization in the library opposed by many LIS Professionals and staff.
2. **Flexibility with new technology:** LIS professionals including staff should take the training of new technology and adopt in the library for user and service point of view.
3. **Always Proactive:** Do your work in a well-planned manner? Maintain daily ‘to do work” diary. Make planner for the weekly, monthly and yearly activities of the library, organization and users with date and duration like stock verification for library project of an organization or research project during the year, so you can get the idea about the work. So you can provide well-planned quality service to your user knowing their projects and research needs.
4. **Personal Development:** You have to develop excellent communication skills, constantly update personal knowledge regarding the latest development in the LIS field and in the field or subject related to your organization or your end-user.
5. **Develop qualities** like politeness, humbleness, soft-spoken, and approachable behaviour.
6. **Develop strategies:** Cultivating the reading habits among the younger users converts the non-users as in the active users etc.
7. **Technical Knowledge required :**
 - 7.1 Operating systems - Windows, UNIX, LINUX.
 - 7.2 Word processing, Graphics, Spreadsheet & Presentations.

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- 7.3 Database Management Systems including the skills in Bibliographic Database Management Systems.
 - 7.4 General purpose programming, Networking
 - 7.5 Web page Development and Content Management
 - 7.6 Information Retrieval software for online, CD-ROM and Internet.
 - 7.7 Library Management software packages, Digital Library Tools.
 - 7.8 Technological facilities and resources (computer, online catalogues, websites, LANs file servers etc.)
- 8. Open Access:** knowledge of the OA e-resources, make institutional repository or digital library or website of the organization and make a database of published literature of organization, staff and the students.
- 9.** Knowledge of various resources including print and non-print materials.
- 10.** Financial Resources Management.
- 11.** Human Resources Management

Conclusion:

The Role of the librarian in the digital or electronic era has become more important. The information explosion and beyond the control of the information overflowing create lots of problems. No one stands alone library in the world acquired all the published information. Billions of web pages, blogs, e-journals, e-books, e-database and so on. E-resources are published every day and available on the web. But the users are not able to search the required information. They heavily depend upon the google and other search engines. Most of the user is not getting their required information on the web. The information available on the net is free always not available. Users find some important information on the net but the information provider generally asks money in Pound, Dollar or in Euro. In such a situation the Librarian can help the users with their special skills and knowledge regarding various resources in the form of printed and non-printed.

Most of the users are having computer knowledge. They are easily handling it. The librarian provides orientation regarding the resources available in the library and outside the library by providing links, on the library website of various database and e-resources subscribed by the library, by a blog and by using the social networking site. This helps the user a lot. Libraries and librarian should be approachable on the web (Online) and available 24 x 7 for the betterment of our country's progress. In the modern era the librarian is known as e-Librarian, Cybrarian, Digital Librarian and library is known as a cybrary, digital library, virtual library, and library without wall etc.

The role of the librarian has changed in the digital library era. Each and every librarian has to acquire new skills required for developing and managing the digital libraries. The library and information professionals are required to acquire such knowledge and skills. It is today's need and if we fail to do so then the people will acquire our place which is not a good sign for the pure LIS profession.

REFERENCES

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