Professionals in the ICT Era Essential Skills for library and Information Science

Vuppala Lingaiah

Research Scholar MS University., Librarian, K.G.Reddy College of Engineering & Technology, Chilkur,Moinabd(M) .

Dr. K Muragan

Librarian, Universal College of Engineering & Technology, Vallioor – 627 117, Tamil Nadu State, India.

Abstract:

This paper describes an essential skill for library and information science professionals in the ICT era. The developments in various emerging technologies and improved the skills and challenges that face the library professionals. The traditional library change to hybrid library, all library professionals ability and their familiarity with various skills required in the ICT era for getting better services.

Keyword:

General Skills, Information and Communication Technology skills and Information Literacy skills.

Introduction

They live in an information society where the development of information technology and telecommunication networks is accompanied by a corresponding increase in knowledge, with a rapidly changing environment. This new information environment requires new skills in seeking, processing and using information. The base for individual ability to understand and use information is a qualitative, ongoing learning process. The role of librarians and information professionals in this new environment has been strongly influenced by these changes.

New Technology called for organizational change in the traditional library. It also has brought revolutionary changes in handling, delivering and storage of information. Rapid changes in ICT have drastically changed the functions and activities of information professionals in libraries.

Introduction of modern technologies and application of ICT in the field of library and Information Science has entirely changed the image of libraries and it becomes service oriented organizations to enhance the quality and service of the professionals. The very nature of librarian's job is routine one and the personal working in the libraries have to update. Librarian, Universal College of Engineering & Technology, Vallioor – 627 117, Tamil Nadu State, India. . He can face the challenges that occur in a particular profession because of the

social, economic, educational and technological changes. Thus in order to cope with the ever-changing library and information science profession, the library professional must be a skilled professional. The librarians are facing new challenges, new competitions, new demands, new expectations and a variety of information services from users. They are now to be more acquainted with the skill of handling new technologies related to collection, processing and dissemination of information.

General skills

Learning to learn:

learning is an important part of our daily life which enhances knowledge to work well. How to learn is the key to acquiring new skills which sharpens the ability to think through problems and to deal successfully with the challenges and acquiring other skills.

Foundation skills

The skill of knowing how to learn is cost –effective because it can make less harmful to learn new skills. Planned efficient learning skill is an urgent necessity for many professionals dealing with rapid technological change and depends on productivity, innovations and competitiveness.

Figure.1. Various types of General Skills
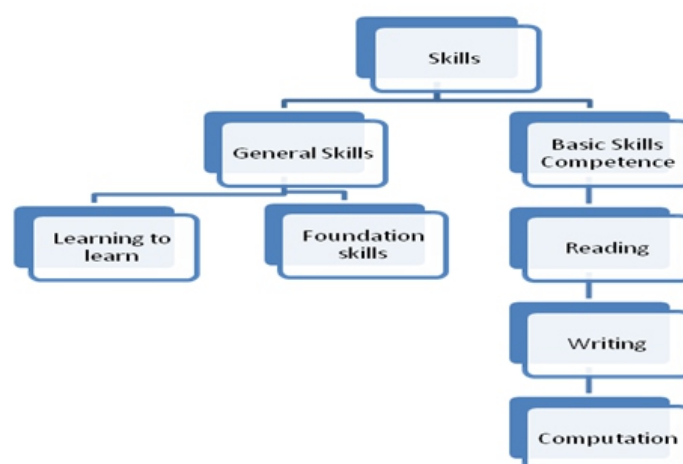
Communication Skills

A better knowledge of reading and writing skills are the formal education in communication. By training in oral communication and listening will improve the quality of some skills in all of the following areas.

The adaptability skills are as follow:

» Problem Solving

The ability to recognize and define problems, invent and implement solutions and track and evaluate results is the problem solving skills.

» Creative Thinking

Individual capacity for creative thinking can spring new approaches to problem solving, organizational design and product development.

Management Skills:
The technical, human and Conceptual skills are the essential management skills.

Soft Management Skills:
i.Interpersonal Relations
An ability to motivates and encourages effective interpersonal relationships in the work setting.
ii.Conflict resolution
Ability to resolve problems and disturbances and negotiate differences with others.
iii.Information processing
Ability to established and maintains a network of relationships with outside persons to bring
iv.Decision making
Serve for alternative solutions evaluate potential consequences and solve problems to the benefit of all concerned.
v.Resource allocation and Entrepreneurism
The professionals allocate the resources of the organizations and acts as initiator and designer of controlled change in the organization.
vi.Introspection
Ability for prepare herself by learning through self study, awareness, getting information from self and others.

Team Work skills

The employer's team work skills can help to improve their ability to determine self behavior, social interaction and share responsibility.

Information and Communication Technology Skills
Libraries are the information centers. Due to the technology explosion, library has different facilities like computer, internet, Xerox, electronic mail, microfilm, CD-ROM, OPAC, Audio – visual and online services.
ICT Skills needed for library professionals

The libraries and information centers have to face new challenges only through this technological revolution. Sometimes technology lays waiting for an application to emerge. All libraries face growing challenges in managing their acceptance maintaining or improving services channels to patrons. Over the past 20years, libraries have shown marked process in this technology.

Information use pattern has become rapidly changing in the present globalized environment due to fast pace of development in technology. Information and Communication Technology in terms of storage and transmission of information has attained greatly from kilobytes to terabytes.
The important ICT skills are needed as follows:

» Basic Knowledge of a personal computer
» Software knowledge skills
» Networking knowledge skills
» Downloading software skills
» Computer security skills

APPLICATION OF ICT IN LIBRARIES

» Online Public Access Catalogue(OPAC)
» Reference Service
» Bibliographic Services
» Indexing and Abstracting Services
» Current Awareness Services
» Selective Dissemination of Information(SDI)
» Electronic Document Delivery Services
» Interlibrary Loan and Union Catalogues
» Audio – Visual Services
» Internet
» Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Information Literacy Skill

In the information age everyone needs to become competent and confident information users. Information literacy can contribute to develop the information skill needed to handles the Information Technology use by the end user. Information literacy empowers the ability to access, evaluate, and use information effectively. Users need to master the skills of finding, handling, evaluating and using it because it is scattered in print, electronic, and digital forms and format. Suggested step for develop the skill is follows:

» Development of thinking skill such as problem solving reasoning and critical evaluation.

» Information gathering and reflection which in turn promotes deep learning.

» Promote to users for develop acquisition of effective information skill through conceptual awareness of nature of information and its diversity.

» Encourage information skills development through self directed learning.

Research skills:

The Library and information professional (LIS) has emerged, not only as a profession and the educational programme that supports it, but also as a research discipline. Research is needed to create new knowledge and thereby contribute to the growth of LIS as a profession or discipline. LIS professionals have to know, in addition to the research praxis, methods and techniques, the basis and fundamentals of it. They all deal with the information needs of their users oriented towards, or around, research taking different forms.

New Challenges for Library and Information Service Professionals

In a fast changing, expanding diverse global digital information environment, libraries are facing a variety of complex challenges from multiple sectors of the knowledge society in the 21st Century. The major challenges are:

* Information Explosion
* Information and Communication Technology (ICT) revolution
* Explosive growth and usage of web resources
*

The following are some of important items of new technologies on which LIS professionals need to seriously think about improving their competencies for their effective utilization to deliver need based high quality information services to the user community.

* ICT Trends
* Metadata Standards
* Web Technology
* Search Technology
* Digital Information Resources
* Subject Gateways
* Information Portals
* E-learning
* Online information services
* Digital rights Management and
* Wi-Fi and RFID (Radio FrequencyIdentification Technology) Technology

Skills required for better Librarianship: The following skills are required:

* Archives Management
* Records Management
* Supervisory Management
* Information Retrieval
* Technical Processing
* Research Skills
* Information Provision
* Information Analysis
* Basic Information Systems
* Communication for Management
* Reference Services
* Provision of Information Services

Conclusion

Today, in this progressive world, competitors are left with no choice but to add golden feathers to their profession by gaining various skills to exhibit their potential. To attain improvement in profession and achieve their goals, they must equip with various skills because skills are required in the day - to - day work for carrying out their routine job more effectively.

Reference/ Bibliography :

Ashcroft, L. (2004), "Developing competencies, critical analysis and personal transferable skills
in future information professionals", Library Review, Vol. 53 No. 2, pp. 82-8.

Croud, J., Manning, M. and Schmidt, J. (2007), From Lackey to Leader: The Evolution of the
Librarian in the Age of the Internet, available at: www.library.uq.edu.au/papers/
from_lackey_to_leader.pdf

Doherty, J.J., Hansen, M.A. and Kaya, K.K. (1999), "Teaching information skills in the
information age: the need for critical thinking", Library Philosophy and Practice, Vol. 1
No. 2, available at: http://libr.unl.edu:2000/LPP /doherty.pdf

Gerolimos, Michalis and Konsta, Rania. (2008). Librarians' skills and qualifications in a modern
informational environment. Library Management, Vol. 29 No. 8/9, 691-699.

Heye, D. (2006), Characteristics of the Successful Twenty-First Century Information Professional, Chandos, Oxford.

Fisher, B. (2004), "Workforce skills development: the professional imperative for information
services in the United Kingdom", Proceedings of the ALIA Conference 2004: Challenging
Ideas. Queensland, Australia, 21-24 September, 2004, available at: http://conferences.alia.
org.au/alia2004/pdfs/fisher.b.paper.pdf