 CANADIAN LIBRARY HUMAN RESOURCE STUDY
ÉTUDE SUR LES RESSOURCES HUMAINES DANS
LES BIBLIOTHÈQUES CANADIENNES

TRAINING GAPS ANALYSIS FOR LIBRARIANS AND LIBRARY TECHNICIANS

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INTRODUCTION

- Study Purpose: Investigate questions around library education-industry match, both for professionals (Master's level programs) and for paraprofessionals (Library Technician programs)
- Study proposed by CLA to Cultural Human Resources Council
 - ◆ Funded by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada through Sector Council Program

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CONTEXT: LIS EDUCATION & TRAINING

- LIS education considerations
 - ◆ Library education = key point of entry into the field of library and information studies (LIS)
 - ◆ Roles for
 - ✦ Education versus training
 - ✦ MLIS versus LIT programs
 - ✦ Formal education versus professional development
 - ◆ Competing stakeholder interests
 - ✦ Labour Market
 - ✦ Students
 - ✦ Profession / ALA Accreditation
 - ✦ Graduate Studies
 - ✦ Parent Post-secondary Institution

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Management and Leadership

- Over the next 5 years, employers say librarians will have to perform
 - ◆ More managerial functions: 85%
 - ◆ More leadership roles: 88%
- Librarians agreeing "it is important to have a job that allows me to..."
 - ◆ Perform leadership role: 62%
 - ◆ Motivate others: 64%
 - ◆ Manage service / dept: 44%
 - ◆ Supervise others: 36%
 - ◆ Seeking out new projects: 74%
- 60% of librarians interested in management skills training

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Role Shift

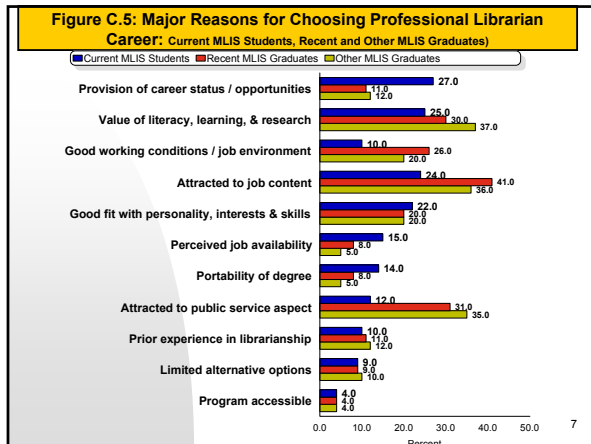
- Traditional librarian duties are being taken on in an increasing capacity by paraprofessional staff
- 78% of institutions reported that paraprofessionals have taken on more of these responsibilities over the past 5 years
- Role shift expected to continue over the next 5 years
- Librarians and paraprofessionals likely to perform many of the same aspects of collections work, public service, IT
 - ◆ Librarians more likely to participate in professional development and administration / management
 - ◆ Paraprofessionals more likely to perform technical / bibliographic services

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METHODS

- Textual Analysis
 - ◆ curriculum, professional development
- Employers' Surveys
 - ◆ Phase I (n=461)
 - ◆ Phase II (n=58)
 - ◆ Competency Needs; Assessments of LIS education
- MLIS Deans/Directors and LIT Program Heads Interviews:
 - ◆ Program Foci; Program Change; Program Accessibility
- Current Student Survey: MLIS (n=354) LIT (n=503)
 - ◆ Demographic, Work, and Educational Background; Career / Program / Employment Choices; Program Accessibility; Competency Interests/Provision
- Employee Survey (n=4693) recent MLIS grads (n=272) recent LIT grads (n=139)
 - ◆ Demographic, Work, and Education, Background; Career and Program Choices; Competency Development and Assessment of Education

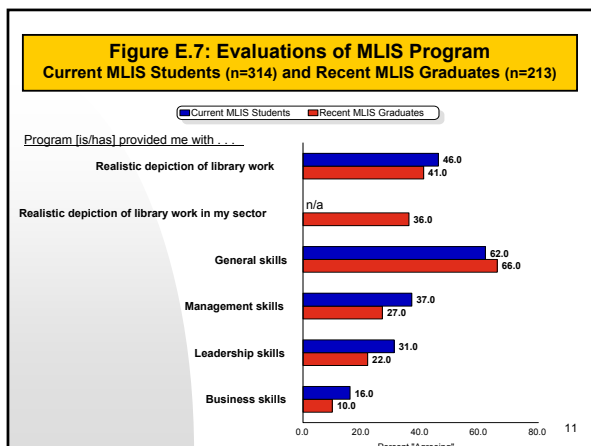
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- ### LIS STUDENT / RECENT GRAD PROFILE
- Female predominance
 - Low visible minority representation (< nat'l average)
 - About 1 in 5 MLIS students/grads w/other graduate degree
 - About 1 in 20 MLIS students/grads w/LIT diploma/certificate
 - 4 in 10 MLIS students currently working in library

- ### PROGRAM ACCESSIBILITY
- 2 in 3 MLIS students chose school because of convenient geographical location
 - 3 in 5 chose school due to "desirable" geographic location
 - About 3 in 5 students chose program because the curriculum topic(s) suited interests
 - About 2 in 5 chose program / school due to good reputation
 - 1 in 4 students chose their program due to affordability (excluding scholarships)
 - 85% of MLIS students perceive entrance requirements to be appropriate
 - 72% MLIS view program delivery options sufficient.
 - Primary suggestion: increase distance education

- ### MLIS EDUCATION-EMPLOYER COMPETENCY NEED MATCH
- Employers' stated important and difficult to fulfill competencies when hiring librarians
 - Leadership potential: 42%
 - Managerial skills: 40%
 - Ability to respond flexibly to change: 39%
 - Technology, innovativeness, ability to handle high-volume workload: 32%
 - Students' perceived most important and inadequately provided competencies
 - Business skills: 32%
 - Leadership skills: 24%
 - Managerial skills: 22%



- ### MLIS Education Improvements
- Employers' improvement suggestions to MLIS:
 - Better technology skills: 38%
 - More management skills: 37%
 - More business skills: 31%
 - More practical experience: 21%
 - More leadership skills: 14%
 - Students' suggestions:
 - More practical / applicable content: 41%
 - Business / management training: 18%
 - Leadership training: only 2%
 - New graduates' suggestions:
 - More practical training: 33%
 - More management training: 19%
 - More leadership training: 5%

Competency Match: MLIS Programs

- Students see largest gap in perceived importance and provision of business skills, followed by leadership and managerial skills
- 46% of students believe their program provides a realistic depiction of what is like to work as a librarian /in a related field
- 68% of current students satisfied with education quality
- 75% of employers believe MLIS education equips graduates with the competencies required to be professional librarians at their organizations

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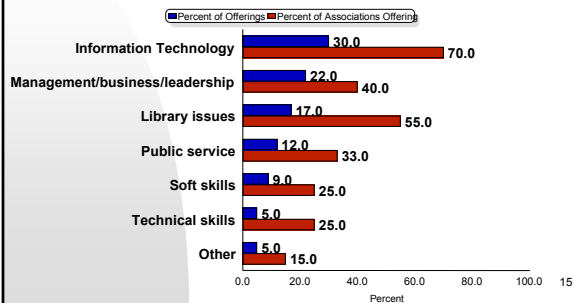
SYSTEM CHANGE : MLIS Programs

- Little formal educator-employer communication
 - Both acknowledge need to improve
- MLIS programs' need to meet needs of multiple stakeholders
 - different library sectors
 - local vs international employers
- Reliability of info on emerging competencies?
 - Consensus on importance of managerial skills, however
- Profession's unrealistic expectations of entry-level education?
- Understanding of education vs. training
- Increasing distance education opportunities while ensuring program quality
 - Potential for collaboration through Canadian Council of Information Studies
- Lack of contact with LIT programs = 2 educational solitudes

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LIBRARY ASSOCIATION TRAINING

Figure G.5: Types of Training Offered by Library Associations (n=20)



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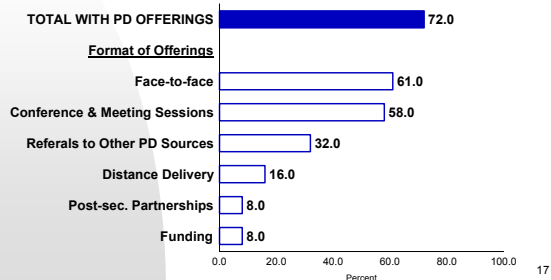
Professionals' Access to Training

- "Agreeing" workplace provides sufficient opportunities to participate in training
 - Total: 58%
 - Academic: 65%
 - Public: 53%
 - Special: 56%
 - School: 59%

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LIBRARY ASSOCIATION TRAINING

Figure G.4: Association Professional Development Formats (n=53)



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BROAD RECOMMENDATIONS

- To meet need for more diverse workforce:
 - educators to employ recruitment and marketing strategies designed for diversity
 - Visible minorities
 - Immigrants
 - Dynamic workforce
 - Variety of background credentials
- Need to rectify current stereotypical images of librarianship
 - Library community
 - Library associations
 - Recruitment process to LIS programs
- Facilitate and foster aptitudes through curriculum and employers' recruitment criteria / workplace practices
- More education and training in leadership / management

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BROAD RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continuous IT training in programs and professional development
- Programs, employers, and associations should meet regularly, on a formal basis to discuss changing competencies and needs for education and training diversity

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Recommendations for MLIS Education Programs

- LIS programs consider diversity programs for Canadian and international students
- Educators enhance distance delivery options where feasible
- Educators market and recruit keeping in mind the personal competencies important for success in the field
- Educators consider how personal competencies are being fostered and developed through the curriculum
- Educators enhance their formal avenues for learning about the needs of employers, such as conducting focus groups or surveys
- MLIS and LIT programs have greater contact to discuss the foci of their programs and curricula, and how they are addressing core competencies

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Recommendations for MLIS Programs

- Personal aptitudes and professional potential of applicants beyond academic achievement (GPA) should given consideration
- Programs communicate to students and employers the purpose and functions of entry-level education
- Greater level of management and leadership courses or content
- Balance between “traditional” skills with emerging competency needs of the labour force
 - ◆ Evaluation of management and IT courses in consultation with employers
- Enhanced course work applicable to specific practice settings
- Deans/Directors use CCIS for collaborative opportunities
- Student involvement in educator-employer meetings may provide greater awareness of workplace realities

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Recommendations for Employers

- Employers consider how they recruit for / foster personal and professional competencies
- Training needs of all paraprofessionals (library technicians and others) are duly considered and enhanced
- Employers examine management training needs and enhance opportunities, either internally or through external sources
- Employers address the need for leadership professional development
 - ◆ experiential learning models such as leadership institutes or leadership forums
 - ◆ partnering with associations and/or other institutions where appropriate

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Recommendations for Employers (cont.)

- Employers proactively communicate with LIS programs re:
 - ◆ emerging competency needs
 - ◆ for specific areas of curriculum (e.g. IT, management)
- Employers proactively communicate with associations / organizations offering PD re:
 - ◆ emerging competency needs in general
 - ◆ specific areas of coursework

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Charge to the Community

- Recruitment isn't about numbers, but about qualities and competencies
 - ◆ Management, leadership, IT
- Recruitment isn't just to institutions, but to the profession
 - ◆ Convergence between the profession and the schools
- Address the challenge of increasing and supporting diversity in the library workforce

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Charge to the Community

- Build greater accessibility to library education programs
- Commit to professional development for all library workers
 - ◆ Take on leadership and management development as core competencies to be nurtured within the workforce
 - ◆ Gain greater understanding of role shifts and how they define core competencies
 - ◆ What do new and mid-career staff see as necessary competencies?
 - ◆ How can training barriers (due to limited budgets) be addressed?

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Getting the Information Out

- *The Future of Human Resources in Canadian Libraries* download:
<http://www.ls.ualberta.ca/8rs>
- *Training Gaps Analysis for Librarians and Library Technicians* download:
<http://www.culturalhrc.ca/research/default-f.asp/>
<http://www.culturalhrc.ca/research/default-e.asp>
- CLA President's Council
- IMLS study of library workforce in the United States:
<http://www.libraryworkforce.org>
- North Carolina workforce study on career progression
- CARL Education Working Group
- 2008 Human Resources Summit at OLA Superconference

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