

COMPETENCIES NEEDED BY PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF

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Context

Technology has been the driving force of change, which has impacted industries and organizations worldwide. It has created an extremely knowledge-dependent society in which consumers have heightened expectations for immediate satisfaction of informational needs. Within the library profession, the roles of library staff as information providers have been reshaped by these changes. In order to effectively manage and cope with this accelerating rate of change, a clear definition and understanding of the skills needed to successfully carry out the new roles in this changing environment are required. The use of competencies has been recognized as one means of providing a clear definition for the profession.

The rise of global interest in the use of competencies has coincided with the recognition, in both public and private sectors, that people are the most valuable assets of any organization. The concept of people as valued assets reinforces the correlation between staff and the success of an organization. In order for the organization to succeed, it has to ensure that all levels of staff have the necessary abilities to maintain success. Success is often maintained by focussing on the efforts of people, within a competitive environment. One approach to managing employees that takes into consideration their efforts, as well as the behaviours that influence those efforts, is a competency-based management system.

A competency-based management system provides a process whereby competencies needed to achieve organizational success are clearly defined. The system is behaviourally anchored so that both managers and employees can see what is expected of them. The system can also be used to integrate several human resources functions:

The model can be used as the basis for executive development, recruitment, selection, compensation, performance appraisal, career development, job design, and organization design. In its crudest form, it is a yardstick for measuring how someone is performing, comparing current performance to an ideal, and suggesting actions that can be taken to improve that performance. What makes the competency model concept work is its simplicity, the prevailing conditions in the company that provide a fertile bed in which it can grow, managers believing in it, and employees accepting it.¹

This paper will review the development and implementation of the behavioural and technical competencies that are required by public library staff. The behavioural competencies are presented within a theoretical framework, which is viewed in the context of the experience of the Toronto Public Library. The technical competencies are defined in relation to Information and Communication Technology (ICT). ICT skills are assessed to determine the levels of competency among public library staff in four countries. A comprehensive bibliography on competencies is also provided in appendix 4.

Introduction

Competencies have sustained global interest in the last decade. Many organizations have conducted competency studies to identify those competencies that are needed to make the organization successful. While there are different approaches to competencies, one of the most commonly applied approaches is that in which competencies are used to focus on the people doing the job, that is, their knowledge, skills and attitudes required to do a job successfully, rather than the work itself. This means that cognitive (knowing), behavioural and affective (feeling) factors are all at work in a competency. Thus a competency includes:

- **knowledge** – what is known and understood about a subject in order to ensure successful performance on the job. An example might be knowledge and understanding of the social and intellectual needs of a library's client group.
- **skills** – which are necessary to process this knowledge. An example might be effective communication skills.
- appropriate **attitudes** and **values** – which are exhibited in behavioural characteristics that impact the way knowledge and skills are brought to bear on the job. These are usually internal evaluations of what might be considered good or important, such as the insistence on giving the best service possible at all times.

This definition² has been extended to include the fact that a competency:

- affects a major part of one's job (i.e., competencies applied should affect one or more major roles or responsibilities).
- correlates with performance on the job (i.e., competencies should bear relationship to jobs).
- can be measured against well-accepted standards (This is particularly crucial when competency-based performance is used as a basis for promotions or other personnel decisions).
- can be improved with training.

Each competency developed by an organization will consist of:

- a **definition** that contains all the critical elements of the competency.
- **levels** of proficiency, which are described as scales for assessment purposes.

Competencies fall into one of three main categories: core, behavioural and technical.

- Core competencies reflect what an organization does best, and are based on the values of the organization. They are considered necessary for all jobs in the organization, and all employees are expected to demonstrate these competencies.
- Behavioural competencies (also referred to as personal competencies) apply to those

performance characteristics that influence and drive performance. They are usually relevant to several jobs across the organization.

- Technical competencies (sometimes referred to as professional competencies) relate to technical knowledge or skills that are critical for a specific job/role to be successful.

A glossary of terms is provided in appendix 3.

Behavioural Competencies Needed by Public Library Staff

Background

Toronto Public Library is a Canadian institution that has undergone extensive organizational changes. The new library was created on January 1, 1998 as a result of Provincial legislation, which amalgamated seven municipalities, each of which had its own library system. The new Toronto Public Library is governed by a Board appointed by the City Council. The City Librarian reports to the Board but has dotted line responsibility to the Commissioner of Neighbourhood Services Department of the City of Toronto. The amalgamation is a complex multi-dimensional process which resulted in:

- a new city serving 2.4 million residents
- a new political structure with a unified City Council, an elected Mayor and 57 councillors representing 28 wards
- a challenging public service environment in which there was a shift from a stable environment to one more like the private sector where there is continual flux
- new and evolving administrative policies and procedures
- a new library environment with complex changes
 - seven former systems amalgamating into one
 - environment of fiscal restraint
 - new library board

Prior to amalgamation, individual libraries had well-established practices in the area of performance appraisal for both unionized and non-unionized staff. Annual performance evaluations were conducted on all employees. Goals and objectives were set and training needs were identified in relation to these goals and objectives.

Examples / Best practices

The first step in the process of defining competencies is for the organization to determine what its core competencies are, i.e., what is necessary to make that organization successful. In addition to the core competencies, job or role-specific competencies and technical competencies are also identified. The identified competencies are then used to measure professional and personal skills and behaviours, and are also used for recruiting, training, counselling and employee evaluation.

Toronto Public Library

During 1998/1999, significant work was undertaken by the City of Toronto to harmonize human resources practices as well as develop and implement a performance management system that is competency-based.³

The City of Toronto employed the services of a consultant group, which used a research-based foundation for its competency framework. In December 1998 the process started with 11 key city managers describing the behaviour, skills and knowledge that were needed for them to be effective as managers. The results were compiled and used, along with performance management materials gathered from all former municipalities, and information from the database of the consultant, to develop the first draft of 22 behavioural competencies.

A series of focus groups were held in the first quarter of 1999 to elicit input and discussions. The focus groups reviewed the competencies, providing a critique of each competency and identifying anything missing from them. This process resulted in the revision of all competencies. Integrity was deleted as a competency leaving the following 21:

Competency	Definition
Adaptability	The willingness and ability to be flexible and work effectively with various individuals or groups in a changing environment. Being open to understanding and appreciating different and opposing perspectives, adjusting one's approach to changing situations and accepting changes.
Commitment to Continuous Learning	Accepting responsibility for one's own career, and involves taking actions to improve skills, knowledge and abilities. Applying concepts, strategies and expertise that contribute to one's marketability and the organization's ongoing success.
Conceptual Thinking	The ability to identify patterns or connections between situations or ideas that are not obviously related, and to identify key or underlying issues and/or principles in complex situations. Conceptual thinking includes reasoning that is creative and imaginative.
Customer Service Orientation*	A desire to identify and meet/exceed the requirements of internal and external customers. Recognizing the variety of customers in communities and at all levels of the organization and accommodating their diverse needs
Developing Others	A genuine intent to foster the long-term success and growth of others by assisting with identification of individual needs and by providing monitoring, and feedback. Planning and organizing one's work and the work of others to ensure goals are met. Seeks to develop others to the extent that tasks and responsibilities can be delegated and minimal supervision is required.
Fiscal Responsibility*	The ability to effectively manage and optimize human, financial and physical resources qualitative and quantitative measurement, planning and control of resources to maximize results.
Holding People Accountable	Ensuring others meet objectives and expectations in an appropriate and effective manner. Ensuring the performance management process is conducted in the division/work unit throughout the year. Provides clear direction, appropriate tools, resources and authority to support success.
Impact and Influence	The ability to persuade, convince, influence, motivate or communicate with others to gain commitment.
Innovation*	An effort to enhance performance by being creative, promoting new ideas and introducing new solutions or procedures.

Competency	Definition
Leadership	The ability to create and communicate a vision and engage others in its achievement. It is the ability to demonstrate behaviours that model and support the organization's aspirations and values and ensure its success.
Leading Change	The ability to initiate, facilitate or implement a change. Helping staff and the organization's stakeholders understand what the change means to them, building a shared vision and providing the ongoing guidance and support which will generate and maintain enthusiasm and commitment to the change process.
Listening, Understanding & Responding	The ability to practice active listening, understand and respond appropriately when interacting with individuals and groups. Reflecting on your verbal and non-verbal behaviour. The ability to effectively liaise with management, staff, union representatives, elected officials, other governments, community groups and the general public.
Organizational Awareness	The understanding and ability to work within structures and relationships in one's own organization or in other organizations. Knows the formal decision-making processes. The ability to identify the decision-makers and individuals who can influence them; and to predict how new events or situations will affect individuals and groups both within and external to the organization.
Planning, Organizing & Coordinating	Proactively planning, establishing priorities, allocating resources, implementing plans, and monitoring and adjusting work to accomplish goals.
Problem Solving	Understanding a situation by breaking it apart into smaller pieces, or tracing the implications of a situation in a step-by-step way. The ability to organize information, identify key factors, underlying causes, troubleshoot and generate solutions. Setting priorities, determining responsibilities, making decisions and taking appropriate action.
Relationship Building	Establishing, building, and maintaining strong and reciprocal relationships and a network of contacts to keep a pulse on public, political and internal issues and to make informed decisions. Identifying who to involve and when and how to involve them in order to accomplish objectives and minimize obstacles.

Competency	Definition
Responsiveness to the Public	Ensuring that the strategic direction and service delivery of the organization is sensitive to public needs through an awareness of how organization programs, policies, and decisions impact public interests and concerns,
Results Orientation*	The desire or drive to achieve or surpass identified goals. Establishes performance objectives and measures to continuously improve performance and the standard of excellence in the organization. Includes innovative or entrepreneurial behaviours.
Strategic Orientation	The ability to link long-range visions and concepts to daily work. Strategic orientation moves from understanding business fundamentals and strategies to a sophisticated awareness of the impact of the external environment on strategies and how external factors affect choices.
Striving for Clarity & Quality	An effort to increase quality and consistency, and reduce uncertainty through behaviours such as monitoring and checking for accuracy, insisting on clarity of roles and functions, etc.
Teamwork*	Being part of a team and working co-operatively with others. "Team" is broadly defined as any task or process-oriented group of individuals working towards a common goal.

* Core Competencies

Of the remaining 21 behavioural competencies, five were selected as core competencies. The selection of core competencies for the City of Toronto was based on:

- The kind of organization and culture desired
- The city's values and aspirations

The core competencies describe specifically what kinds of skills, behaviours, and personal characteristics employees are expected to demonstrate. The intent of the City of Toronto is to ensure that these competencies are consistent throughout the organization regardless of job position, business unit, or geographic location. They apply to all municipal employees including the library.

The behavioural characteristics of the core competencies are:

Customer Service Orientation

- Clarifies expectations
- Takes personal responsibility

- Takes action for the customer
- Addresses underlying customer needs
- Uses a long-term approach

Fiscal Responsibility

- Understands key resource issues affecting one's responsibilities and business priorities using resources to increase customer value
- Demonstrates fiscal prudence
- Models effective utilization
- Advocates benefits for the organization

Innovation

- Seeks new solutions
- Takes action new to the job or function
- Introduces new ideas to the organization
- Introduces new ideas to the public sector
- Encourages innovation in others

Results Orientation

- Wants to do job well
- Works to achieve goals
- Sets own standards to improve performance
- Sets and strives to meet higher standards of performance
- Conducts cost-benefit analyses
- Takes calculated entrepreneurial risks

Teamwork

- Co-operates and contributes
- Promotes team co-operation
- Builds a high-performing team

Perspectives

Toronto Public Library feels that its involvement in the core competencies is an important first step towards building an organization that is responsive to rapid changes. The Library will adopt the five core competencies identified by the City of Toronto, as reflective of the values of all City employees. The remaining job-specific competencies, once developed, will be evaluated by the library to ensure that they adequately reflect the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to providing superior library service.

Once the Library has determined the job-specific competencies, it can begin the process of integrating them into the human resource processes. Position descriptions will be developed to reflect the required competencies and these will be incorporated into the recruitment and selection, performance management, training and development, succession planning and compensation programs.

Examples of Competencies from the Library Profession

Some specialist Library groups such as the Special Library Association (SLA) have led the way in defining essential professional and personal competencies for librarians. The SLA competencies identify both the personal and professional knowledge and skills needed for special librarians to compete effectively in the Information Age. Personal or behavioural competencies as defined in **Competencies for Special Librarians of the 21st Century**⁴ provide some useful insight into competencies needed by librarians:

- Personal competencies represent a set of skills, attitudes and values that enable librarians to work efficiently; be good communicators; focus on continuous learning throughout their careers; demonstrate the value-added nature of their contributions; and survive the new world of work.

Thirteen personal or behavioural competencies of the librarian have been identified by SLA. The librarian:

- Is committed to service excellence.
- Seeks out challenges and sees new opportunities both inside and outside the library.
- Sees the big picture.
- Looks for partnerships and alliances.
- Creates an environment of mutual respect and trust.
- Has effective communications skills.
- Works well with others in a team.
- Provides leadership.
- Plans, prioritizes and focuses on what is critical.
- Is committed to life-long learning and personal career planning.
- Has personal business skills and creates new opportunities.
- Recognizes the value of professional networking and solidarity.
- Is flexible and positive in a time of continuous change.

Some libraries have reported successful implementation of the SLA competencies. The Technical Information Services of the American corporation, Westinghouse Energy Systems is one such example. They have incorporated a combination of job responsibili-

ties, behaviours and competencies into the formal performance appraisal process for staff. In this process, the supervisor and the employee agree which competencies apply to known work of the coming year; weights and ratings are then added. Strengths are acknowledged and weaknesses are worked on. This new collaborative process has resulted in the development of stronger staff skills and an improved work environment.⁵

The National Library of Canada (NLC) is another organization, which is going through the process of development and implementation of competencies. They are currently at the implementation phase. The process started in spring 1996 with a Senior Management forum, which focussed on identifying essential skills for the National Library's workplace in the year 2001. The first duty of the NLC Core Competencies Committee, which was appointed to guide this process, was to establish the definition for competencies as:

- observable and applied skills and behaviours that are essential for personal performance and the success of the organization.⁶

The first phase had three targets: the development of a core competency profile, the development of a training plan and the development of a skills inventory based on the identified competencies. The achievement of these targets culminated in the publication of a final report on the process and the results. The Committee identified fifty-five competencies that were organized into the following twelve sections:

- I. Communication Competencies
- II. Information Technology Competencies
- III. Change Competencies
- IV. Organizational Competencies
- V. Problem-Solving Competencies
- VI. Team Work competencies
- VII. Self-Management Competencies
- VIII. Corporate Competencies
- IX. Service Competencies
- X. Management Competencies: People Skills
- XI. Management Competencies: Process and Organizational Skills
- XII. Systems Competencies

Sections one to eight cover the core competencies which are tied to the mission and strategic objectives of NLC and which all employees must possess to some degree.⁷

In late 1999 the National Library produced the final report on the second phase in which the following activities were completed:

- Review of the NLC Competencies Profile
- Creation of a communication plan
- Redesign and validation of the Skills Inventory
- Distribution of the Skills Inventory to staff
- Collection and analysis of the completed Skills Inventory surveys
- Writing of recommendations based on the results of the Skills Inventory

During this phase, staff identified gaps between the levels of competency they currently possess and those required in their jobs both now and three years in the future. The library is currently using the results of the Skills Inventory survey to prepare a strategic training plan for library staff.

Other Work in the Library Field

Work is in progress at the national level in some countries:

United States: In late 1999 a Task Force on Core Competencies was appointed by the American Library Association to address two major recommendations of the Congress on Professional Education held in May 1999. The Task Force is to develop a clear statement of competencies for librarianship for the 21st century, which is to be available to educators, practitioners and the public. In addition to identifying core competencies of the profession, the Task Force will develop competencies for the generalist librarian of the future. The Task Force is also to revisit the core competencies included in the 1992 standards for accreditation. A draft statement is currently in progress. This draft will draw on work of ALA Divisions as well as sister associations such as the Medical Library Association, Special Libraries Association and American Association of Law Libraries.⁸

Australia: The Library Industry Competency Standards (LICS) were developed as part of the Federal Government's National Training Reform Agenda by Arts Training Australia and a task force of representatives of employer associations, unions and professional bodies from the library sector. They were released in 1995.⁹ Some successful trials of the LICS have been conducted at Curtin University of Technology and at the Australian Taxation Office Library.

Whilst the Curtin University implementation refers to the implementation of competency standards in the tertiary sector, there is an excellent publication that documents the implementation of library sector competencies into the Curtin Library workplace.¹⁰

The work shows how Core Competencies are used to specify essential and desirable selection criteria for positions, to link performance, planning and coaching in relation to strategic objectives and to reward performance. It also documents the use of Competencies to revise and develop training programmes for staff.

Canada: A competency profile of information resources management specialists in archives, libraries and records management has been produced by the Alliance of Libraries, Archives and Records Management (ALARM) in partnership with the Cultural Human Resources Council with the support of Human Resources Canada.¹¹

Lessons Learned

A significant body of research has indicated that the formal use of competencies has a positive impact on the performance of an organization. A management study,¹² which explored the most critical corporate strategic leadership components, ranked exploiting and maintaining core competencies as second of six critical components of strategic leadership. The high ranking is due to the fact that many organizations are now de-emphasizing automation and emphasizing employee skills and problem-solving capabilities.

The beneficial impact of competencies on the organization can be seen in many ways:

- Competencies are tied to the values of an organization and therefore serve to foster these values.
- Competencies provide clear and specific definitions that support the purpose of the organization.
- Competencies provide clear guidelines as to what it takes for the organization to be successful.
- Competencies provide practical tools for performance management.
- Competencies target training needs required for development of staff. This process results in the development of an organization that has a continuous and dynamic learning environment.
- Competencies provide a better fit between employees and their job requirements resulting in:
 - Greater effectiveness
 - Improved employee satisfaction
 - Quicker learning / more adaptive staff

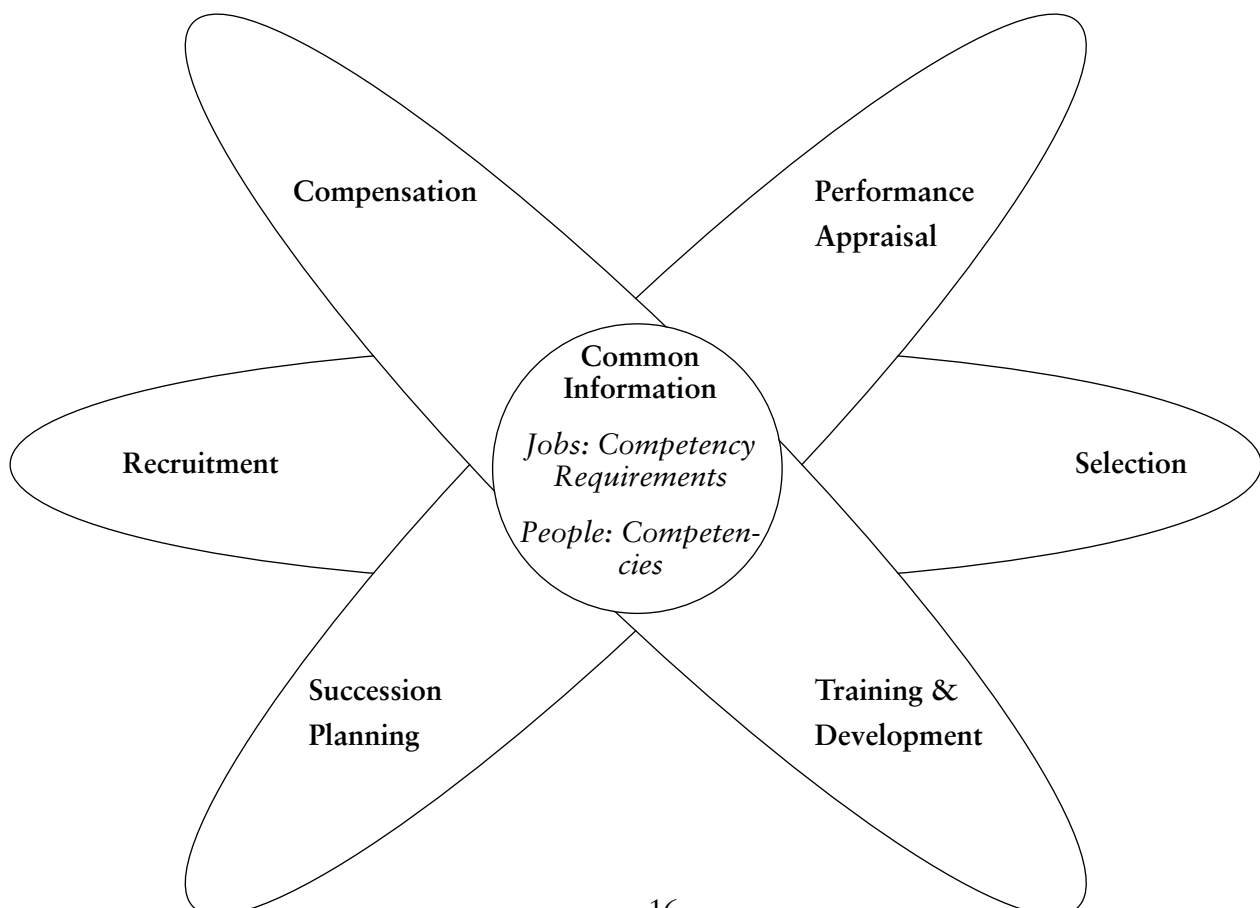
Factors that contribute to the successful development of competencies are listed below. These success factors are based on the experiences of six large North American companies: AT&T Capital Corporation, Burger King, Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Chase Manhattan Bank, Herman Miller Incorporated and Houston Lighting & Power Company.¹³

- Competencies must be appropriate for the specific organization. Despite this emphasis on specificity, competency models of competitors within one's field and leading edge companies in other fields should be reviewed.

- Competencies should hold good for many years to ensure that communication to staff and development of staff can be adequately maintained. Some of these companies took up to a year for the communication process and staff had to be given time to learn the competencies.
- Competencies are fluid as they are affected by the changing work environment. Consequently they have to be reviewed to ensure they reflect the requirements of the organization.
- There should be considerable staff involvement and input and, in a unionized environment, the role of the union should be carefully considered when implementing core competencies.
- Competencies must be measurable and simple enough to be understood by staff.

Implementation

One of the recommended models for the implementation of competencies is that in which competency assessment becomes the basis for all human resources activities. This is achievable through the use of an integrated human resource management information system, which includes a database shared by all human resource functions. This database provides a common language and integrates all human resource services. The diagram below, which is based on Spencer and Spencer's work, illustrates the concept of an integrated human resource system:¹⁴



At the centre of the system is the database containing the information about the competency requirements of jobs and competencies of people used by all human resource functions: recruitment, selection, placement, compensation, performance management, succession planning and training and development. The job competency requirements consist of profiles, which have been developed for each job or role within the organization. The profiles indicate which competencies are considered necessary for successful performance of the job. Each competency includes an assessment system that indicates the level of proficiency that should be demonstrated. The levels become more complex as behaviours go up the scale.

The personal competencies are based on assessment done by employees. Using the same rating system as that of the job profile, the personal competency indicates to what level an employee has demonstrated each competency for a given job. Competency gaps are indicated when a personal competency surpasses or falls short of the job competency profile.

Exceeding the required level is not a problem as this is an indication that a level, which may be required for a future position, has already been achieved. The training and development component of the model is used to target deficiencies in order to raise performance levels and thus ensure superior performance in jobs.

Recruitment and selection are based on the competencies required for the job. It is felt that competency-based selection increases performance and decreases turnover rate because people well matched to the environment of their jobs enjoy their work more and this improves the organizational climate.¹⁵ Succession planning is done by comparing employees' competencies with the competency required of future jobs. Compensation includes competency-based pay elements to encourage employees to develop needed competencies. The performance appraisal system assesses employees' competencies at least yearly and inputs these data into the database to ensure that the system has up-to-date assessments of employees' competencies.¹⁶

A competency-based human resources management system can be implemented in phases. Some organizations implement the training and development component after assessment identifies competency gaps. The National Library of Canada, for example, plans to have staff learn competencies through training and development and will later use them for recruitment. In a study¹⁷ of 57 Canadian institutions, 32 were engaged in competency initiatives. Half were at the initial stage of competency development and had made no use of competency profiles. These organizations intend to use competencies for training and development and later for recruitment. The other half, which were further along in their use of competencies, applied them in the following ways: (Some use competency profile for more than one purpose)

- 9 for learning
- 7 for recruitment and staffing
- 2 for performance appraisal
- 1 for succession planning

While implementation can be done in phases, it is recommended that a coherent and systematic implementation process be developed. Experience has shown that it is often the lack of strategic implementation that leads to the collapse of a new program.¹⁸ Eventually competencies should be linked to selection, pay and promotion in order to become part of the people management system.¹⁹ If competencies are used only for development, they are unlikely to stick.

Steps in Implementation of a Competency-based Management System²⁰

1. Determine strategic direction of organization (Use senior management, corporate business plans, etc.)
 - Determine the strategic objectives of the organization.
 - Do an analysis of organizational and resource capabilities. It is necessary to know what capabilities to grow, protect or shrink.
2. Design the principles and architectural framework of the competency model. (This step is for the development of a vision of how the system should look and work).
 - Think of how the whole system should look and work with particular attention to the critical applications for success such as promotion, selection and pay.
 - Think of how the competencies should be linked to jobs. One option is to create a set of competencies for each major organizational goal. Another option is to have separate levels of detail within a simple overall structure. It would consist of these elements:
 - a library of potential competencies for the organization as a whole
 - subsets of the library with 6-12 competencies for each major job category
 - 4-10 statements describing each competency in terms of behaviour
3. Develop the competency model and tools for linking human resources functions to the model. There are several ways to develop a model.²¹ An approach that involves many people interactively is recommended.
 - Identify and define competencies (One guideline in deciding on the number of competencies is to focus on the most critical areas of competence that will have an impact on performance.²²)
 - use terms that are understood by the potential users
 - use competency language that is consistent across the target population
 - Create competency profiles for each job / role / position. (A profile is the set of competencies specific to job / role / position: includes core, behavioural, technical/ knowledge)
 - Use a balanced approach to collect competency information on existing jobs. Methods could include:
 - direct observation

- panel of experts who know the jobs and competencies required to get results
 - focus groups involving incumbents, supervisors, clients
 - surveys
 - job analysis interviews
 - benchmarking with similar organizations
 - databases of information on performance
 - Include descriptions of the competencies in different levels of detail
 - Develop tools to link human resources functions. Some of the tools could be:
 - assessment and feedback tools, including self-assessment, management appraisal, and 360 feedback (a person and his/her supervisor, peers, staff or customers (or some combination) are the evaluators in his/her performance assessment)
 - guides for creating development plans
 - development ideas mapped to the competencies
 - career-planning guides
 - action-learning programmes
 - training mapped to competencies
 - a competency-based pay structure
 - recruitment and selection system
 - Develop system to house tools. To ensure tools are accessible to all employees, one approach is to place the competency model and tools where all employees have electronic access.
4. Communicate progress and benefits to all stakeholders.
5. Implement in phases. First, introduce the competencies and a few basic elements of the new tools or system. This provides an opportunity for staff adjustment while the additional tools are being developed. Introduce the additional tools.

Note that testing and validation of the model for both reliability and capability for measurement must be done as part of the implementation process.

Factors which contribute to successful implementation include the following:

- An effective implementation process is crucial. This includes communicating the benefits; how the information will be used; why the organization is doing it; how competencies are linked to the overall strategy of the organization; whether they are linked to other Human Resources activities and processes and why an individual should be involved.
- A high level of management commitment and support is required and commitment is long-term. (Some organizations outsource their non-core functions so that more management time and resources can be spent on core competencies²³).
- An organization must ensure that a development programme is in place since training and development are key considerations in the application of competencies.

- Some competency models fall short when they are used to determine individual pay. Although there is general agreement that “more competent” individuals should be paid more highly than “less competent” individuals, there is a challenge to convert the idea of competencies into measurable characteristics that allow for reliable and valid determination of pay rates.²⁴
- Human Resources should be involved with the competencies programme from the earliest stages or in the form of a pilot. This prevents a loss in translation of meaning when the developed model is turned over to Human Resources for ongoing management.
- Competencies must be applied correctly or they become meaningless.

In implementing a competency model, an organization should be aware of the following:

- Development and implementation of competencies is labour-intensive. Several focus groups as well as general staff involvement is usually required.
- The process can be costly, and it is only in the long term that payback really occurs.
- If there is a limited budget, it is suggested that 10% be spent on building the model and 90% on implementation.
- The whole process may take several years. For example the City of Toronto’s projected time-line is December 1998-January 2002.
- An organizational culture that allows empowerment of staff, has a history of personal development and influential management is critical to the success of the model.

The following section of the paper focuses on technical competencies needed in the library field, specifically information and communication technology competencies. This provides a practical example of the level of work required to identify specific competencies.

ICT Competencies In Public Library Staff

The Revision of IFLA's Guidelines for Public Libraries published on the Internet by IFLA in August 1999²⁵ states in section 8.1.9 **The management of change:**

In common with many other organizations, public libraries are going through a period of unprecedented and on-going change as a result of the rapid development of information technology and social and demographic change. This presents tremendous opportunities for the public library, as information provision is one of its primary roles. It also presents challenges to managers and staff to ensure that change can be introduced with the maximum of effectiveness and the least stress on staff and the organization. Library managers must be aware of the issues arising from continuous and fundamental change and establish methods of dealing with them.

The implementation of information technology in public libraries and its impact on the work of staff, has required that new and existing staff develop competencies in information and communications technology (ICT) that were not required even five years ago.

The British report **Building the new library network**²⁶ produced by the Library and Information Commission undertook a study on the attitude of public librarians and their support staff to the new technologies in their work place. It also assessed staff training needs to enable them to gain the competencies required to deal with the new technology.

Key Findings of the British Study "Building the New Library Network"

The key findings of this report in relation to public library staff were as follows:

1. The study indicated that managers of all kinds have typically had significantly more exposure to ICT than front-line workers.
2. Priorities for front-line workers include basic ICT skills, navigation of the Internet, and ICT equipment trouble shooting.
3. Middle manager's needs relate well to five roles outlined in New Library: the people's network including Net Navigator, IT Gatekeeper, Information Consultant, Information Manager and Educator.
4. The two most popular methods of training across all groups were: (i) a short course plus ongoing online support in the workplace and (ii) in-house training courses.

As part of the study on the competencies required for public library staff, the questionnaire used by BECTa (The British Educational Communications and Technology agency) that prepared and administered the questionnaire in Britain for the Library and

Information Commission, was used to assess public library staff in Scotland, Finland, Canada and Australia.

Permission was given by the Library and Information Commission to the author to use the questionnaire. The aim of repeating the study was to evaluate whether public library staff from other countries responded to the questionnaire differently from those who responded to the original study. It was also aimed to evaluate whether the two intervening years since the study was undertaken had made any difference in the responses by public library staff to the use of ICT in their libraries.

The Multi-Country Study

Public library staff in Scotland, Finland, Canada and Australia completed the questionnaire via the Internet. An attempt was made to ensure that all levels of staff responded to the survey.

Each of the public libraries had a manager who was involved in the Bertelsmann Foundation's International Network of Public Libraries and so cooperation was easily obtained to enable the questionnaires to be returned to the person undertaking the survey.

The four libraries surveyed were West Lothian in Scotland, Helsinki in Finland, Toronto in Canada and Stirling in Australia.

Key Findings of the Multi-Country Study

1. Of the four public libraries surveyed, 100% of staff at all levels indicated that they had access to a computer at work.
2. The two major uses of technology by all staff were circulation and word processing.
3. 100% of staff in all libraries had access to word processing and a spreadsheet program, but usage of the spreadsheet was not widespread, particularly in Canada and Australia.
4. 100% of staff in all libraries had access to the Internet, but a small number of staff in Australia and Scotland did not use it.
5. Whilst two staff indicated that they did not have access to Intranet, the author would believe that they did in fact have access to an Intranet, but were unaware of it or filled in the questionnaire incorrectly. Therefore, it is feasible to suggest that 100% of all staff had access to an Intranet, whether it was the library Intranet or that of the Local Authority.
6. 100% of all respondents had access to email and used it.
7. Respondents indicated that their preferred method of training for ICT competencies was by training centre-based short courses or through in-house training courses.

100% of respondents indicated that they were not interested in distance learning and a very low number were prepared to tackle on-line learning.

8. The incidence of home PC ownership amongst all levels of library staff was high in the Canadian, Finnish and Australian staff. The low level of home PC ownership in the Scottish sample could well be related to the small number of staff in the sample group compared to the larger samples from the other countries.

Difference in Use of Applications by Management and Front-line Staff

The original British study indicated that senior or managerial staff had had the most exposure to ICT applications and are heavier users of it. This was still found to be true in the multi-country study, but the major difference was that all staff regularly use the Internet and the variation between front-line and managerial staff in the use of applications has flattened out.

This universal use of the Internet is a dramatic change in the two years since the original study was carried out.

Staff Group	Word Processing	CD-ROM	Internet
Helsinki Front-line Staff	Yes – 88.9% No – 11.1%	Yes – 55.6% No – 44.4%	Yes – 100%
Helsinki Management	Yes – 100%	Yes – 50% No – 50%	Yes – 100%
Stirling Front-line Staff	Yes – 80% No – 20%	Yes – 40% No – 60%	Yes – 100%
Stirling Management	Yes – 83.3% No – 16.7%	Yes – 100%	Yes – 100%
Toronto Front-line Staff	Yes – 100%	Yes – 66.7% No – 33.3%	Yes – 100%
Toronto Management	Yes – 100%	Yes – 100%	Yes – 100%
West Lothian Front-line Staff	Yes – 100%	Yes – 100%	Yes – 100%
West Lothian Management	Yes – 100%	Yes – 100%	Yes – 100%

Home PC Ownership

In the original study, 50% of managerial staff had access to a home PC and over 50% of front-line staff had access to a home PC. The multi-country study shows that there is a wide variation between the staff in each of the surveyed countries.

The 100% home PC access in both categories of staff in Toronto and West Lothian contrasts with the low 40% of home access by front-line staff in Stirling and the 50% of managerial staff in Helsinki, where front-line staff indicated a higher percentage of home access.

A wider sample would need to be taken to test whether these figures are a true indication of the variance between the sampled countries.

Staff Group	Home PC Access	
	YES	NO
Helsinki Front-line Staff	77.8%	22,2%
Helsinki Management	50%	50%
Stirling Front-line Staff	40%	60%
Stirling Management	83.3%	16.7%
Toronto Front-line Staff	100%	
Toronto Management	100%	
West Lothian Front-line Staff	100%	
West Lothian Management	100%	

Attitude to ICT

All of the respondents were asked to rate their attitude to ICT.

1 = I am a heavy user of ICT and generally comfortable with it

2 = I am a heavy user of ICT but I have some concerns about it

3 = I don't feel one way or the other about ICT

4 = I don't know much about ICT but worry about being left behind

5 = I don't know much about ICT and I'm not sure that I need to

No staff indicated that they fell within categories 4 or 5, which indicates that public library staff on both levels in the surveyed groups were feeling comfortable and competent with ICT.

No question was asked that would enable conclusions to be drawn about what concerns those people had who indicated that they fell into category 2. But these concerns could range from the respondent's ability to keep up with the changes in technology to the fact that it is impacting on the personalized service that staff are able to give the public library user.

Management concerns relate to the ability of public libraries to sustain the amount of money required to keep ITC systems up-to-date or to the impact on staff training budgets.

However, the responses to this question do indicate that staff are feeling comfortable and competent in the new ITC environment and that all levels of staff have responded to the change in their work environment exceptionally well.

Staff Group	1	2	3	4	5
Helsinki Front-line Staff	55.6%	33.3%	11.1%		
Helsinki Management		100%			
Stirling Front-line Staff	20%	80%			
Stirling Management	16.7%	83.3%			
Toronto Front-line Staff	66.7%	33.3%			
Toronto Management	100%				
West Lothian Front-line Staff	100%				
West Lothian Management		100%			

ICT Competencies Required by Public Library Staff

Work is being carried out in several countries to articulate the competencies that public library staff require in the ICT component of their jobs.

Appendix 11 of the **Building the new library network** report²⁷ states that the basic level of competence attained by public library staff should consist of a foundation in information and communication technology, supplemented by competence in four functional areas, these being:

1. Supporting people's learning
2. Providing access to information
3. Reader development
4. Helping people to use public services

It indicates that the ICT competence will be provided through the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) as developed by the European Computer Driving Licence Foundation, which owns the copyright for the modular materials developed for the syllabus.

The ECDL comprises one theoretical test and six practical tests, which assess competence in using the computer. It is an internationally accepted document that will assure employers of the competence of the person holding the Certificate.

The ECDL is now being used as the basis for developing ICT competency courses for library staff in Australia, with Macquarie University currently working on the development of a syllabus for Australian use based on the ECDL and IT Competencies as developed under the Australian Standards Framework.

In Canada, the National Library of Canada has articulated Information Technology Competencies which are included as part of this report.

Perspectives

From the results of the multi-country study undertaken in early 2000, it would appear that library staff at all levels are now feeling more comfortable and more competent with the ICT component of their jobs.

Staff have dealt with the large leap from paper-based systems to the automation of almost all library processes during the eighties and nineties, and have now embraced the new Internet technology with enthusiasm. This enthusiasm has developed as they learn what it can do to enhance the information services that they provide to their clients.

The level of home access to PC's indicates that public library staff have also embraced the new ICT technologies in their personal life. This augurs well for the improvement of competency in the ICT area.

With these changes in staff attitude, the role of the public library as an institution that offers access to the new technologies to the community is assured.

Conclusion

A review of public and private sector literature was conducted in preparation for this report. Some of the behavioural competencies that are considered critical for successful organizations in both sectors include customer focus, innovation, teamwork, communication, adaptability / flexibility and continuous learning.

As the paper outlines, the development of a competency-based management system represents a major commitment by an organization. Although implementation can be phased, even the initial phase of identifying and defining competencies is time-consuming and involves large numbers of staff. If implementation is successful however, and competencies are well developed in a library, they will serve to influence the performance of staff as well as shape their continuing education efforts. The use of competencies both as a model for job descriptions and as a recruiting tool will serve to attract people who are well matched to the demands of the new roles of the library and information profession.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Competencies of the National Library of Canada (NLC)

I. Communication Competencies

Communication involves understanding and being understood by individuals and groups at all levels within and outside the National Library. Effective communication should be clear, concise, courteous, constructive, correct and complete.

1. Listening

- listening to understand the message being communicated
- providing opportunities for others to speak
- paying attention to the comments and questions of others
- understanding interpersonal and non-verbal communication, including the role of conflict as a barrier to communication.

2. Speaking

- expressing ideas orally in a clear and concise way
- using appropriate language
- adapting the style and content of speech to the audience.

3. Reading

- reading with comprehension, to understand the main ideas and details.

4. Writing

- expressing ideas in writing in a clear and concise way
- using appropriate language
- producing writing that is coherent, grammatically sound, and appropriate to purpose and audience
- producing effective written documents and responses in the most appropriate media or forms, e.g., reports, memos, letters, electronic messages (e-mail and Internet), articles, performance reviews, and procedure manuals
- using charts, graphs and diagrams to explain concepts and ideas.

II. Information Technology Competencies

Competence in the use and understanding of information technology involves the effective use of technical equipment and tools to accomplish work. It also involves demonstrating an appropriate level of technical expertise, as well as the ability to adapt and apply new technologies to improve NLC services and products.

5. Computer Literacy

- using the keyboard and mouse
- using software applications appropriate to the job function
- finding and retrieving information in a LAN environment
- using the National Library's bibliographic and on-line systems
- organizing on-line resources and files for effective access
- understanding and applying the policies that govern computer use.

6. Electronic Communication

- understanding and using an electronic mail system
- understanding and using the Intranet as an internal communication tool
- understanding and using the telephone, including voice mail and fax.

7. Adapting to New Technology

- accessing new resources that become available
- finding and using on-line Help functions when using new software.

III. "Change" Competencies

"Change" competencies deal with the capability to adjust one's behaviour to meet the demands of a changing work environment. It involves the willingness to take on different responsibilities at different points in time and to respond effectively to the changing needs of clients, co-workers and supervisors / subordinates.

8. Adaptability to Change

- recognizing the effects of change on yourself and your peers
- reducing resistance to change in yourself
- helping others to accept change
- remaining productive through periods of transition
- addressing any negative results of change in a realistic and constructive manner.

9. Willingness to Learn New Skills

- viewing change as an opportunity to launch new initiatives and improve work processes
- embracing new methods of working

- seeing and using change “mechanisms” (technology, process improvements, etc.) as enablers of new ideas, products and services.

10. Demonstrating Flexibility

- adapting quickly to deal with new job responsibilities and issues
- working effectively in a variety of situations, with individuals or groups
- accepting ambiguity and uncertainty in the environment
- balancing the need for change with the need for continuity.

IV. Organizational Competencies

Organizational skills include the ability to plan and execute work in order to achieve desired results. They also include the ability to stay focused and produce quality work even when working with deadlines.

11. Planning and Managing Work

- clearly defining goals, objectives and action steps
- identifying and acquiring resources needed to complete tasks
- keeping others informed about potential problems or difficulties and suggesting ways to overcome them
- considering both the short-term objectives and the big picture.

12. Managing Time and Setting Priorities

- using time management techniques (to-do lists, day-timers, diaries, B/F systems²⁸) to organize work flow and set priorities
- anticipating delays and potential problems when planning work and adjusting time frames accordingly
- managing a variety of tasks while still producing results.

13. Meeting Deadlines

- acting in a decisive way to meet key objectives on time
- remaining accountable for work and delivering on commitments
- learning from experience so difficult situations do not repeat themselves.

14. Getting the Job Done

- focusing on what needs to be done
- accepting ownership of work
- working towards resolving problems that impede workflow.

V. Problem-Solving Competencies

Problem-solving is the ability to facilitate an effective, timely outcome or resolution. The process is composed of two separate but complementary skill sets: analysis and creativity. Analysis involves thinking in a disciplined and logical manner; creativity involves using fresh, resourceful means to generate ideas and solutions.

15. Analytical Skills

- collecting and synthesizing data
- addressing problems systematically, identifying key issues and drawing logical conclusions
- thinking through the consequences of all decisions
- maintaining a sense of proportion, recognizing that not all problems are equal.

16. Creative Skills

- generating new and imaginative ideas for work-related issues
- making connections between situations that are not obviously related
- challenging self and others to step outside the commonly accepted ways of doing things.

17. Applying One's Cognitive Abilities

- using common sense and past experience
- recognizing patterns, trends or causes of events
- considering a broad range of factors when solving problems
- asking the right questions to get the necessary information.

18. Committing to Action

- taking the initiative as problems arise, being action- and results-oriented
- determining optimal solutions in situations of ambiguity, competing resources, external and internal constraints
- taking a risk and making decisions based on available data, even if it is incomplete.

VI. Teamwork Competencies

Teamwork involves the ability to work cooperatively with others to achieve common organizational goals and objectives. It includes both interpersonal skills and those skills needed to work effectively in groups.

19. Interpersonal Skills

- respecting the opinions and ideas of others
- resolving conflicts in a constructive, non-threatening way
- encouraging others to offer ideas and demonstrating interest in their opinions.

20. Working Effectively with Others

- developing and maintaining smooth, cooperative working relationships
- participating actively in group problem-solving processes
- sharing expertise and experience with others in order to achieve organizational goals
- encouraging consensus decision-making.

21. Encouraging Teamwork

- looking for forums and opportunities for groups to work together
- finding ways to collaborate and exchange ideas on problems
- stimulating open discussion among work groups.

VII. Self Management Competencies

Self-management competencies are those that the employee brings to the organization in general and to the job or assignment in particular. Self-management is centred around an inner sense of purpose and a willingness to take responsibility for one's actions. It assumes the employee has a well-developed sense of right and wrong, and seeks always to do what is right: for himself or herself, for colleagues, for the organization as a whole, and for clients.

22. Self-Motivation

- taking responsibility for sustaining the desire to work and a sense of purpose
- setting challenging, but realistic goals for oneself
- pursuing excellence in one's own work.

23. Initiative

- going beyond the routine demands of the job or assignment:
- working independently to perform one's duties, and seeking always to increase this independence and reduce the need for direction from others
- taking personal responsibility for the outcome of events
- taking action beyond explicit requests
- seeking opportunities to influence events and originate actions
- determining when action is and is not appropriate.

24. Managing One's Own Learning

- maintaining an active interest in self-development and taking responsibility for furthering one's own learning
- defining and updating career goals
- evaluating one's own strengths and weaknesses
- modifying behaviour based on feedback from others on one's performance and the self-analysis of one's experience
- continually seeking opportunities for learning and training.

25. Ethical Behaviour

- showing honesty and sincerity in actions undertaken, and consistency with personal and organizational principles and values
- following through on commitments made
- demonstrating fairness and a sense of community (“we’re all in this together”) in dealing with colleagues and clients.

VIII. “Corporate” Competencies

“Corporate” competencies are defined as those competencies that support the mission and mandate of the organization. They include supporting the National Library’s commitment to service, its role in the Canadian and international library community, and its vision, values and strategic priorities.

26. Client Orientation

- viewing products and services developed and delivered by the NLC staff in light of users’ needs
- actively focusing on, anticipating, and meeting client expectations and needs
- acting to prevent problems for clients
- balancing the diverse needs of different client groups and individuals
- attempting to reconcile client needs with NL policies and collection priorities.

27. Marketing and Promotion

- understanding the basic concepts of marketing and promotion as they relate to one’s job.

28. Working within the System

- understanding organizational culture and structure
- applying organizational policies, rules, regulations and laws appropriately
- understanding and identifying with the goals and values of the institution.

29. Using Organizational Know-How

- being attuned to internal “politics” and alert to changing dynamics within the organization
- having knowledge of and experience in a range of different functions
- keeping up to date on technical knowledge in one’s own field.

30. Environmental Sensitivity

- understanding the impact and implications of political, social, economic, and technological trends and changes in the external environment keeping in mind both the overall industry “picture” and the details of daily work.

Appendix 2

Ways to Build a Competency Model²⁹

Method	Cost	Probability of Accuracy	Probability of Usage
1. Use outside consultant to interview a sample of top performers for each target population group and compare with interview of average performers. Capture what the top performers do more frequently.	H	H	L
2. Use outside consultants to train insiders to do the tasks in Method 1.	M	H	M
3. Begin with a model from another respected company (with permission); conduct a handful of interviews of top performers to determine if the borrowed model accurately describes what the top performers do.	L	H	L
4. Assemble a group of managers and using a facilitator, brainstorm about the attributes of top performers today and in the future.	L	M	H

H= high; L= low; M=moderate

Appendix 3

Glossary of Terms

Behavioural competency: A competency that emphasizes the personal characteristics needed to influence and drive performance. This competency describes how a person acts as compared to what a person knows.

Competency: The knowledge, skills, attitudes and values required for successful performance in a job. The demonstration of a competency includes the factors of observation, measurement, training and learning.

Competency gap: The measurable difference between a competency as described in the job competency requirements and the same competency as described by an individual

Competency model: The output of a competency study which lays out the set of competencies that are required to perform successfully in a job or role or position within an organization. The model can include definition of competencies, associated behavioural indicators and performance proficiency levels. A competency model may also be referred to as a competency profile.

Competency scale: A definition and description of a competency, with the indicative levels of how that competency can be demonstrated, arranged in ascending order of complexity or degree of proficiency, where each higher level is incremental to (and includes) the previous levels.

Core competency: This term refers to the skills, behaviours and personal characteristics that all employees are expected to demonstrate. Core competencies are based on the values of the organization.

Job competency: A set of pre-defined competencies and proficiency levels required to perform successfully in a specific job or role.

Knowledge: The body of information that must be known in order to perform a job.

Proficiency: This refers to how much of a particular competency an individual must have to be successful in his/her work. It is a degree of mastery of a skill or area of knowledge.

Personal competency: The set of competencies that an individual possesses. This can be determined by various assessment methods that indicate an individual's level of competence.

Role: A generic set of work activities that relates to one or more specific jobs.

Skill: The demonstration of a particular talent such as a technical skill needed for the operation of a computer or a verbal skill needed for making a presentation.

Technical competency: The technical knowledge or skill that is required for a specific job or role to be successful.

Appendix 4

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Appendix 5

Library ICT competencies questionnaire

Public Library ICT (IT)

Questionnaire for International Network of Public Libraries Research on the ICT awareness of public library staff across a range of countries conducted by Kay Poustie, Western Australia

This is based on a questionnaire developed by BECTA. Permission for its use has been granted by the Library and Information Commission of the United Kingdom.

Copies of the Questionnaire should be completed by each of the following staff:

- (i) Chief librarian / Director of libraries
- (ii) Staff training coordinator (if you have one)
- (iii) Middle manager
- (iv) Paraprofessional (if you have this level)
- (v) Front-line staff member
- (vi) Technical services staff member

Overall Aim:

To gather information in order to determine and report on the full range of ICT (IT) awareness of public library staff in a number of countries, and what those staff perceive as training needs to increase their competency.

Section 1

The first section of the questionnaire aims to gather general information about your role, your awareness and use of new technologies, as well as your attitudes towards technology and its potential benefits. No personal names are required.

Administrative Details:

1. Please complete the following form

Local Authority:	<input type="text"/>	E-mail	<input type="text"/>
Type of Library:	<input type="text"/>	Country:	<input type="text"/>
Your Title: Position	<input type="text"/>	Age:	<input type="text"/>
Length of Service in Libraries	<input type="text"/>	Male or Female:	<input type="text"/>

Your Job

2 Please tick the box which best describes your job:

Chief librarian / Director of libraries	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staff training coordinator	<input type="checkbox"/>
Middle manager	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paraprofessional	<input type="checkbox"/>
Front-line staff member	<input type="checkbox"/>
Technical services staff member	<input type="checkbox"/>

Personal use of ICT (IT)

3 Do you have access to a PC:

	yes	no
at home?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
in the work place?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Awareness of Technology

4. Please tick the boxes which best describe your general level of awareness of the following examples of Information and Communication Technology (ICT (IT))

	Not aware			Very aware	
	1	2	3	4	5
Fax					
Internet / world wide web					
PC					
CD-ROM					
Modem					
Scanner					

ICT (IT) applications that you use

5. Please tick the boxes which describe the ICT (IT) applications and systems you currently have access to and use regularly either at home or at work:

ICT (IT) Applications and Systems	I have access to:	I regularly use:
PC Games		
PC-based education / training (eg., self-instruction packages on bookkeeping, French, using a spreadsheet, etc)		
Word-processing		
Database package		
Spreadsheet package (eg. Excel)		
Desktop publishing (eg. Microsoft Publisher)		
Presentation software (eg. Powerpoint)		
Multimedia authoring		
CD-ROMs		
Circulation system		
Electronic acquisitions and cataloguing		
OPACs		
Internet		
Intranet		
E-mail		
Video-conferencing		
Fax		
Other (please specify)		

How you feel about ICT (IT)

6. Please tick the box which best describes your overall attitude to information and communications technology (ICT (IT))

	Please tick
I am a heavy user of ICT (IT) and generally comfortable with it	
I am a heavy user of ICT (IT) but I have some concerns about it	
I don't feel one way or the other about ICT (IT)	
I don't know much about ICT (IT) but worry about being left behind	
I don't know much about ICT (IT) and I'm not sure that I need to	

Preferred methods of ICT (IT) training

7. Please tick the boxes which best describe your preferred methods of ICT (IT) training:

	Please tick
Training centre-based short course	
In-house course	
Distance learning	
On-line training course	
Self-study	
Combination of short course plus ongoing on-line support in your work place	
Other (please describe)	
Don't know	

Work-related ICT (IT) Training Needs

8 Please tick the boxes which best describe your levels of ICT (IT) competence in the various applications, and indicate, where appropriate, if the ICT (IT) application is not relevant to your work:

ICT (IT) Application	Please tick one of these five columns.				
	No expertise	Beginner	Inter-mediate	Confident	Not relevant
PC-based education / training					
Word-processing					
Database package					
Spreadsheet package					
Desktop publishing					
Presentation software (eg., Powerpoint)					
Multimedia authoring					
CD-ROMs					
Book circulation (issuing/discharge etc.) system					
Electronic ordering/ cataloguing system					
OPACS					
Internet					
Intranet					
E-mail					
Video conferencing					
Fax					
Other (please specify)					

New roles for public library staff

9. The “New Library: The People's Network” report published in Britain identified five possible new roles for library staff. Please tick the boxes below which best describe your perception of your level of competence in each of the areas.

ICT (IT) Tasks and Skills	Please tick one of these five columns.				
1Net Navigator	No expertise	Beginner	Inter-mediate	Confident	Not relevant
knowledge and understanding of the Internet					
ability to identify and retrieve from electronic sources					
assess and evaluate electronic materials					
assemble information from a variety of electronic sources					
2 IT Gatekeeper					
allocate budgets and resources for ICT (IT)					
understand the impact of ICT (IT) on service and product development					
translate technologies into services users need					
use ICT (IT) to network people					
set targets and allocate resources for digitisation of content					
3 Information Consultant					
understand user ICT (IT) needs					
know about ICT (IT) resources in your own organization and those of other organizations					
understand and market the new range of professional skills					

	No expertise	Beginner	Inter-mediate	Confident	Not relevant
4 Information Manager					
influence Councils and Committees on the development of ICT (IT) policy understand and comply with legal/copyright issues					
develop ICT (IT) performance indicators for quality assurance, efficiency and effectiveness					
explore and exploit ICT (IT) partnership opportunities					
understand the need for different recruitment and ICT (IT) staff development policies					
have a clear vision of long-term ICT (IT) strategy					
5 Educator					
plan for staff development and staff access to ICT (IT)					
plan for user ICT (IT) education					
understand the use of ICT (IT) to deliver training					
tutor and mentor other staff in support of their development with ICT (IT)					

Any other comments:

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire

Please return completed copies of the questionnaire to Kay Poustie, Manager Libraries, Arts and Culture, City of Stirling Libraries, Civic Place, Stirling. 6021, Western Australia. poustie.kay@stirling.wa.gov.au

Appendix 6

Results of Library ICT Competencies Questionnaire

International Network of Public Libraries				
Library ICT Competencies Questionnaire				
Item	Helsinki	Stirling	Toronto	West Lothian
Average Age	48.2	41.5	35	40.3
Average Length of Service	19.7	14.6	19.7	21.6
Sex				
Male	28.6%	28.6%	37.5%	33.30%
Female	71.4%	71.4%	62.5%	66.70%
Job				
Director	7.1%			16.7%
Staff Training Coordinator	7.1%	5.6%	12.5%	16.7%
Middle Manager	14.3%	33.3%	25.0%	16.7%
Para Professional	22.2%	25.0%	16.7%	
Front-line	64.3%	22.2%	37.5%	16.7%
Technical	7.1%	27.8%		16.7%
Home PC Access				
Yes	71.4%	71.4%	87.5%	33.3%
No	28.6%	28.6%	12.5%	66.7%
Work PC Access				
Yes	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Fax Awareness				
Lowest 1				
2	7.1%			
3			12.5%	50.0%
4		22.2%	25.0%	16.7%
Highest 5	92.9%	77.8%	62.5%	33.3%
Internet Awareness				
Lowest 1				
2				16.7%
3		22.2%		33.3%

Item	Helsinki	Stirling	Toronto	West Lothian
4	28.6%	11.1%	12.5%	16.7%
Highest 5	71.4%	66.7%	87.5%	33.3%
PC Awareness				
Lowest 1				
2				
3	14.3%	16.7%		50%
4	7.1%	16.7%	25.0%	16.7%
Highest 5	78.6%	66.7%	75.0%	33.3%
CD Rom Awareness				
Lowest 1				
2	14.3%	5.6%		33.3%
3	7.1%	22.2%		33.3%
4	14.3%	5.6%	25.0%	
Highest 5	64.3%	66.7%	75.0%	33.3%
Modem Awareness				
Lowest 1				
2	21.4%	22.2%		50.0%
3	7.1%	16.7%	25.0%	16.7%
4	14.3%	11.1%	25.0%	
Highest 5	57.1%	50.0%	50.0%	33.3%
Scanner Awareness				
Lowest 1				
2	7.1%	11.1%		16.7%
3	14.3%	22.2%	25.0%	33.3%
4	21.4%	5.6%	12.5%	16.7%
Highest 5	57.1%	44.4%	50.0%	16.7%
PC Games				
Access Yes	92.9%	55.6%	87.5%	50.0%
Access No	7.1%	44.4%	12.5%	50.0%
Use Yes	14.3%	11.1%	37.5%	33.3%
Use No	85.7%	88.9%	62.5%	66.7%
PC Education				
Access Yes	64.3%	66.7%	100.0%	66.7%
Access No	35.7%	33.3%		33.4%
Use Yes				
Use No	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Word Processing				
Access Yes	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Access No				

Item	Helsinki	Stirling	Toronto	West Lothian
Use Yes	92.9%	83.3%	100.0%	66.7%
Use No	7.1%	16.7%		33.3%
Database package				
Access Yes	100.0%	72.2%	100.0%	83.3%
Access No		27.8%		16.7%
Use Yes	21.4%	27.8%	12.5%	50.0%
Use No	78.6%	72.2%	87.5%	50.0%
Spreadsheet package				
Access Yes	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Access No				
Use Yes	57.1%	27.8%	37.5%	66.7%
Use No	42.9%	72.2%	62.5%	33.3%
Desktop Publishing				
Access Yes	57.1%	88.9%	50.0%	66.7%
Access No	42.9%	11.1%	50.0%	33.3%
Use Yes	21.4%	22.2%	12.5%	16.7%
Use No	78.6%	77.8%	87.5%	83.3%
Powerpoint				
Access Yes	92.9%	50.0%	100.0%	66.7%
Access No	7.1%	50.0%		33.3%
Use Yes	21.4%	5.6%	25.0%	
Use No	78.6%	94.4%	75.0%	100.0%
Multimedia Authoring				
Access Yes	42.9%	5.6%	25.0%	16.7%
Access No	57.1%	94.4%	75.0%	83.3%
Use Yes	21.4%			
Use No	78.6%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
CD ROMS				
Access Yes	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	83.3%
Access No				16.7%
Use Yes	50.0%	61.1%	75.0%	33.3%
Use no	50.0%	38.9%	25.0%	66.7%
Circulation System				
Access Yes	85.7%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Access No	14.3%			
Use Yes	71.4%	94.4%	75.0%	83.3%
Use No	28.6%	5.6%	25.0%	16.7%

Item	Helsinki	Stirling	Toronto	West Lothian
Access & Use of Systems				
Electronic Acquisition/Cat				
Access Yes	92.2%	50.0%	37.5%	66.7%
Access No	7.1%	50.0%	62.5%	33.3%
Use Yes	85.7%	22.2%	25.0%	33.3%
Use No	14.3%	77.8%	75.0%	66.7%
OPAC				
Access Yes	92.9%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Access No	7.1%			
Use Yes	92.9%	83.3%	100.0%	66.7%
Use No	7.1%	16.7%		33.3%
Internet				
Access Yes	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Access No				
Use Yes	100.0%	94.4%	100.0%	83.3%
Use No		5.6%		16.7%
Intranet				
Access Yes	100.0%	100.0%	87.2%	100.0%
Access No			12.5%	
Use Yes	92.9%	55.6%	75.0%	33.3%
Use No	7.1%	38.9%	25.0%	66.7%
Email				
Access Yes	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Access No				
Use Yes	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Use No				
Video Conferencing				
Access Yes			12.5%	16.7%
Access No	100.0%	100.0%	87.5%	83.3%
Use Yes				
Use No	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Fax				
Access Yes	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	66.7%
Access No				33.3%
Use Yes	92.9%	77.8%	87.5%	50.0%
Use No	7.1%	22.2%	12.5%	50.0%
How individuals feel about ICT				
Heavy user / comfortable	50.0%	27.8%	87.5%	33.3%
Heavy user / some concerns	42.9%	66.7%	12.5%	33.3%

Item	Helsinki	Stirling	Toronto	West Lothian
Ambivalent	7.1%			16.7%
Don't know much / concerned	5.6%	16.7%		
Don't know much / don't need to				
Education for ICT				
Training				
Short course Yes	78.6%	77.8%	75.0%	16.7%
Short course No	21.4%	22.2%	25.0%	83.3%
In house Yes	92.9%	72.2%	62.5%	50.0%
In house No	7.1%	27.8%	37.5%	50.0%
Distance Yes				16.7%
Distance No	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	83.3%
On-line Yes		11.1%	25.0%	16.7%
On-line No	100.0%	88.9%	75.0%	83.3%
Self-study Yes	78.6%	38.9%	37.5%	33.3%
Self-study No	21.4%	61.1%	62.5%	66.7%
Combination short/on-line Yes		50.0%	62.5%	50.0%
Combination short/on line No	100.0%	50.0%	37.5%	50.0%
Training needs				
PC-based education/training				
No expertise		38.9%		
Beginner	14.3%	5.6%	25.0%	33.3%
Intermediate	21.4%	33.3%	25.0%	
Confident	28.6%	22.2%	37.5%	66.7%
Not relevant	35.7%		12.5%	
Confidence in ICT applications				
Word Processing				
No expertise				16.7%
Beginner	14.3%		12.5%	
Intermediate	35.7%	50.0%	12.5%	16.7%
Confident	50.0%	50.0%	75.0%	66.7%
Not relevant				
Database package				
No expertise	14.3%	38.9%	12.5%	33.3%
Beginner	28.6%	11.1%	37.5%	
Intermediate	35.7%	16.7%		
Confident	21.4%	27.8%	25.0%	50.0%
Not relevant		5.6%	25.0%	16.7%
Spreadsheet package				
No expertise	14.3%	16.7%	25.0%	16.7%

Item	Helsinki	Stirling	Toronto	West Lothian
Beginner	28.6%	55.6%		16.7%
Intermediate	21.4%	16.7%	37.5%	33.3%
Confident	21.4%	11.1%	12.5%	16.7%
Not relevant	14.3%		25.0%	16.7%
Desktop publishing				
No expertise	28.6%	27.8%	12.5%	16.7%
Beginner		27.8%		
Intermediate		22.2%		16.7%
Confident	14.3%	5.6%	12.5%	16.7%
Not relevant	57.1%	16.7%	75.0%	50.0%
Confidence in ICT applications				
Powerpoint				
No expertise	50.0%	50.0%	37.5%	50.0%
Beginner	28.6%	16.7%	25.0%	16.7%
Intermediate	7.1%	5.6%		16.7%
Confident	14.3%	5.6%	12.5%	
Not relevant		22.2%	25.0%	16.7%
Multimedia authoring				
No expertise	14.3%	77.8%	12.5%	50.0%
Beginner	7.1%			
Intermediate			12.5%	
Confident	28.6%	5.6%		
Not relevant	50.0%	16.7%	75.0%	50.0%
CD ROMS				
No expertise	7.1%			33.3%
Beginner	14.3%	22.2%		16.7%
Intermediate	35.7%	33.3%	25.0%	
Confident	35.7%	38.9%	75.0%	33.3%
Not relevant	7.1%	5.6%		16.7%
Circulation system				
No expertise				
Beginner		5.6%		16.7%
Intermediate	14.3%		25.0%	
Confident	78.5%	94.4%	75.0%	83.3%
Not relevant	1.7%			
Acquisitions / Cataloguing				
No expertise	7.1%	27.8%		16.7%
Beginner	14.3%	16.7%		16.7%
Intermediate	21.4%	16.7%	12.5%	16.7%

Item	Helsinki	Stirling	Toronto	West Lothian
Confident	50.0%	22.2%	12.5%	33.3%
Not relevant	7.1%	16.7%	75.0%	16.7%
OPAC				
No expertise	21.4%			
Beginner				16.7%
Intermediate	14.3%		12.5%	16.7%
Confident	57.1%	100.0%	87.5%	66.7%
Not relevant	7.1%			
Internet				
No expertise				16.7%
Beginner				
Intermediate	14.3%	33.3%	25.0%	50.0%
Confident	85.7%	66.7%	75.0%	33.3%
Not relevant				
Confidence in ICT applications				
Intranet				
No expertise	7.1%	27.8%	12.5%	16.7%
Beginner	7.1%	11.1%		50.0%
Intermediate	7.1%	16.7%	25.0%	16.7%
Confident	78.6%	44.4%	50.0%	16.7%
Not relevant			12.5%	
E-mail				
No expertise				
Beginner		5.6%		
Intermediate	21.4%	16.7%	37.5%	16.7%
Confident	78.6%	77.8%	62.5%	83.3%
Not relevant				
Video-conferencing				
No expertise	21.4%	33.3%	25.0%	50.0%
Beginner				
Intermediate			12.5%	
Confident		5.6%		
Not relevant	78.5%	33.3%	62.5%	50.0%
Fax				
No expertise				16.7%
Beginner				33.3%
Intermediate	7.1%	16.7%	25.0%	
Confident	92.9%	83.3%	75.0%	33.3%
Not relevant				16.7%

Item	Helsinki	Stirling	Toronto	West Lothian
ICT TASKS & SKILLS				
Net Navigator				
Knowledge / Understanding				
No expertise	7.1%			16.7%
Beginner				
Intermediate	21.4%	66.7%	12.5%	50.0%
Confident	64.3%	33.3%	87.5%	33.3%
Not relevant	7.1%			
Identify & retrieve from source				
No expertise				33.3%
Beginner	28.6%		12.5%	
Intermediate	14.3%	72.2%	25.0%	33.3%
Confident	50.0%	27.8%	62.5%	33.3%
Not relevant	1.7%			
Assess & evaluate materials				
No expertise	7.1%	5.6%		33.3%
Beginner	21.4%	44.4%	12.5%	33.3%
Intermediate	14.3%	33.3%	25.0%	16.7%
Confident	42.9%	16.7%	62.5%	16.7%
Not relevant	14.3%			
Net Navigator				
Assemble information				
No expertise		5.6%		33.3%
Beginner	14.3%	22.2%	12.5%	33.3%
Intermediate	21.4%	55.6%	25.0%	16.7%
Confident	35.7%	16.7%	62.5%	16.7%
Not relevant	28.6%			
No expertise				
IT Gatekeeper				
Allocate budgets & resources				
No expertise	28.6%	38.9%	12.5%	83.3%
Beginner		11.1%		
Intermediate		22.2%	12.5%	
Confident	7.1%		12.5%	
Not relevant	64.3%	27.8%	62.5%	16.7%
Understand impact on service				
No expertise		27.8%		50.0%
Beginner		22.2%		

Item	Helsinki	Stirling	Toronto	West Lothian
Intermediate	14.3%	16.7%	62.5%	50.0%
Confident	64.3%	11.1%	37.5%	
Not relevant	21.4%	22.2%		
Translate to services users need				
No expertise		44.4%		50.0%
Beginner		11.1%		
Intermediate	14.3%	33.3%	50.0%	50.0%
Confident	7.1%		25.0%	
Not relevant	78.6%	11.1%	25.0%	
Use IT to network people				
No expertise	7.1%	33.3%		83.3%
Beginner	21.4%	27.8%	12.5%	
Intermediate	21.4%	16.7%	37.5%	
Confident	28.6%	5.6%	12.5%	16.7%
Not relevant	21.4%	16.7%	37.5%	
Set targets for digitization				
No expertise		44.4%	25.0%	83.3%
Beginner	7.1%	22.2%		
Intermediate		5.6%	12.5%	
Confident	7.1%			16.7%
Not relevant	85.7%	27.8%	62.5%	
Information Consultant				
Understand user needs				
No expertise	14.3%			16.7%
Beginner		27.8%		50.0%
Intermediate	35.7%	61.1%	50.0%	16.7%
Confident	50.0%	5.6%	50.0%	16.7%
Not relevant		5.6%		
organization				
No expertise	14.3%			16.7%
Beginner	7.1%	33.3%	12.5%	50.0%
Intermediate	50.0%	44.4%	50.0%	16.7%
Confident	28.6%	16.7%	37.5%	16.7%
Not relevant		5.6%		
Understand / market new skills				
No expertise		22.2%		
Beginner	7.1%	27.8%	50.0%	66.7%
Intermediate	50.0%	33.3%	25.0%	16.7%

Item	Helsinki	Stirling	Toronto	West Lothian
Confident	28.6%		25.0%	
Not relevant	14.3%	16.7%		16.7%
Information Manager				
Influence Council / Committee				
No expertise		22.2%	25.0%	50.0%
Beginner		27.8%		16.7%
Intermediate			12.5%	16.7%
Confident	14.3%		25.0%	
Not relevant	85.7%	50.0%	37.5%	16.7%
Understand / comply copyright				
No expertise	35.7%	27.8%		16.7%
Beginner	28.6%	22.2%	12.5%	66.7%
Intermediate	7.1%	16.7%	25.0%	16.7%
Confident		11.1%	50.0%	
Not relevant	28.6%	22.2%	12.5%	
Develop IT Performance Indicators				
No expertise	28.6%	44.4%	25.0%	66.7%
Beginner	7.1%	16.7%		
Intermediate	7.1%	5.6%	12.5%	16.7%
Confident			25.0%	
Not relevant	57.1%	33.3%	37.5%	16.7%
Explore IT partnerships				
No expertise	14.3%	38.9%	25.0%	66.7%
Beginner	7.1%	5.6%	12.5%	
Intermediate	28.6%	5.6%		16.7%
Confident	7.1%		37.5%	
Not relevant	42.9%	50.0%	25.0%	16.7%
Understand staff IT development				
No expertise		22.2%	25.0%	33.3%
Beginner	7.1%	22.2%	12.5%	50.0%
Intermediate	35.7%	11.1%		
Confident	21.4%		12.5%	
Not relevant	35.7%	44.4%	50.0%	16.7%
Vision of long-term IT strategy				
No expertise	14.3%	33.3%	12.5%	16.7%
Beginner	21.4%	22.2%	25.0%	33.3%
Intermediate	7.1%	11.1%	37.5%	33.3%
Confident	14.3%		12.5%	
Not relevant	42.9%	33.3%	12.5%	16.7%

Item	Helsinki	Stirling	Toronto	West Lothian
Educator				
Plan for staff development				
No expertise		27.8%		16.7%
Beginner		27.8%	25.0%	33.3%
Intermediate	42.9%	16.7%	25.0%	16.7%
Confident	28.6%	5.6%	50.0%	16.7%
Not relevant	28.6%	22.2%		16.7%
Plan for user education				
No expertise	21.4%	22.2%	12.5%	50.0%
Beginner	7.1%	16.7%		16.7%
Intermediate	21.4%	33.3%	50.0%	16.7%
Confident	14.3%	5.6%	37.5%	
Not relevant	35.7%	22.2%		16.7%
Understand IT to deliver training				
No expertise	7.1%	33.3%		33.3%
Beginner	42.6%	33.3%	25.0%	33.3%
Intermediate	28.6%	5.6%	37.5%	16.7%
Confident		11.1%	37.5%	
Not relevant	21.4%	16.7%		16.7%
Tutor & mentor other staff				
No expertise	21.4%	11.1%	12.5%	50.0%
Beginner	14.3%	33.3%	12.5%	16.7%
Intermediate	14.3%	33.3%		
Confident	28.6%	11.1%	75.0%	33.3%
Not relevant	21.4%	11.1%		

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International Network of Public Libraries

Publications - Downloads

Questionnaire

We are very interested in your opinion on the publications of the International Network of Public Libraries, and would therefore like to ask you to fill in this questionnaire and send or fax it back to us. Your feedback and ideas will help us improve future publications.

1) Which report(s) of the International Network have you downloaded?

2) Could you easily find the files on the Bertelsmann Foundation's homepage?

- Yes
 No

Thank you very much - Thank you very much - Thank you very much

3) Did you have difficulties in downloading the pdf. files?

Yes

If yes, which difficulties?

No

4) What do you think of publications in electronic format? Please tick.



**5) Are the topics of the International Network relevant for your practical work?
Please tick.**



**6) In your opinion, which one(s) of the topics have an especially high practical
relevance?**

Thank you very much - Thank you very much - Thank you very much

7) Did you get new ideas for your work when reading the report(s)?

Yes

If yes, which ideas?

No

Why not?

8) Will you try to implement the ideas you gained?

Yes

If yes, which ideas?

No

Why not?

Thank you very much - Thank you very much - Thank you very much

9) Which of the available report(s) would you also be interested in?

10) Which current topics should the International Network deal with in the future?

We would be happy, if you answered two more questions on your current occupation.

11) Who are you currently employed with?

- Public Library
 - small town
 - middle town
 - city
- Academic Library
 - College or University Library
 - Special Library
- Other _____

Thank you very much - Thank you very much - Thank you very much

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12) What is the position you are working in at present?

- Executive position
- Middle management
- Front-line staff member
- Student / trainee
- Other _____

Thank you very much - Thank you very much - Thank you very much