The Process of Librarians and Information Professionals: Report of A Work in Progress

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The Task

To refresh and revamp the “Competencies for Information Professionals of the 21st Century”.

Background

The Special Libraries Association (SLA) has been a leader in articulating the competencies of our field for over 20 years. With the rapid changes taking place, we needed a revision that reflects today’s realities.

Why Is This Important?

Along with mission, a statement of competencies articulates the unique contributions of the profession to society.

For SLA Members and other librarians and information professionals, it’s a resource for articulating their skills and competencies to employers and a checklist for development.

For employers, it's a source for understanding what librarians and information professionals bring, and how they can contribute to organizational performance.

For students and prospective students, it’s a guide to the profession and a framework for choosing courses and programs.

For LIS educators, it’s a framework for developing their curricula.

The Process

May 2015
SLA Competencies Task Force convened

June
Open “knowledge café” at SLA Annual Conference

August
Survey of SLA members – 270 responses

July -- October
Analysis of input using word frequency counting and atlas.ti software to tag text comments

July -- December
Review of published documentation – other competency statements

October -- January
Drafting and polishing

February
Draft available to SLA members for comment

March
Review comments; revise draft

April – June 2016
(If all goes well!) Final document released

The Draft Competencies

Information and Knowledge Services

Information Ethics

Information and Knowledge Systems and Technology

Organization of Data, Information, and Knowledge Assets

Information and Data Retrieval and Analysis

Core competencies

Enabling Competencies

- Oral and written communication
- Networking, relationship-building and collaboration
- Marketing
- Leadership, management, project management
- Initiative, adaptability, flexibility, creativity, innovation, and problem-solving
- Teaching and mentoring
- Critical thinking
- Business ethics