

The Future of Human
Resources in Canadian
Libraries

8Rs Canadian Library Human Resource Study

**Council of Federal
Libraries**

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Starting Question

- Will there be a shortage of librarians in the next 5 to 10 years due to mass retirements?
- A 'simple' question, no simple answers
- In the process we learned:
 - No clear succession crisis
 - Urgency in other areas of library human resources:
 - Competencies, particularly management and leadership
 - Education and training
 - Workloads and quality of work, work-life balance
 - Role overlap between librarians and paraprofessionals



Study Scope

- Investigation of 8 human resources issues in Canadian libraries:
 - Recruitment
 - Retention
 - Rejuvenation
 - Repatriation
 - Remuneration
 - Retirement
 - Reaccreditation
 - Restructuring



Study Scope

- 3-year study of unprecedented breadth and depth
- Over 900 variables
- 275-page report
 - 167 data tables
 - Analyses of data by library sectors and sub-sectors



Methods

- Institutional Survey
 - 1,357 surveys sent to libraries, June 2003
 - Libraries reported on 2002 data
 - 34% response rate overall (461 respondents)
 - 36% response rate for public libraries
 - 50% academic libraries
 - 26% special libraries
- Individual Survey
 - Web survey sent to 8,626 library workers, June 2004
 - Response rate of 36.5% (3,148 respondents)
 - Additional 1,545 responses through listserv
 - Total of 4,693 responses



Government Response Rates

- Institutional sampling frame included federal, provincial, municipal government libraries
- Individual survey
 - Government respondents 10% of all respondents
 - 61% of librarian government respondents federal
 - 52% of paraprofessional government respondents federal



Data Limitations

- Broad view
- Sub-sector representation
- Numerical retirement predictions not authoritative



Librarian Age Categories

	< 45	45-54	55+
Gov't	37%	37%	26%
CARL	32%	39%	29%
Nat'l	35%	40%	25%



Paraprofessional Age Categories

	< 45	45-54	55+
Gov't	42%	47%	11%
CARL	33%	42%	25%
Nat'l	38%	41%	21%



Estimated Age of Retirement

Librarians:

	Gov't	Average
○ before age 60	59%	41%
○ between 61-64	18%	30%
○ at age 65	19%	23%

Paraprofessionals:

○ before age 60	62%	43%
○ between 61-64	14%	25%
○ at age 65	12%	26%

- Note: respondents indicate flexibility on age of retirement



Past and Predicted Retirements

- Between 1997-2002
 - 22% of government libraries experienced retirements (34% national average)
 - 8% experienced paraprofessional retirements (23% national average)
 - This totaled 9% of the government librarian workforce, 3% of paraprofessionals

- Predicted Canadian librarian workforce (based on age of retirement of 62 years):
 - 2009: 98% of current workforce
 - 2015: 89% of current workforce
 - Paraprofessional workforce estimates similar



Predicted Retirements by Career Level

- By 2009:
 - 14% of all librarians in government
 - 15% of government librarians in management

- By 2014:
 - 38% of all librarians in government
 - 45% of government librarians in management



Replacing Competencies from Current Pool

- Pool inadequate to replace lost skills and knowledge from retirements
 - Gov't: 61%
 - CARL: 23%
 - National: 40%

- Pool inadequate to replace lost leadership competencies
 - Gov't: 57%
 - CARL: 35%
 - National: 46%



Barriers to Replacing Competencies Lost with Librarian Retirements

- Budget restraints: 71%
- No ID of leadership ptnl. when hiring: 68%
- No succession plan: 64%
- Inadeq. ldrshp/mgmt training by org: 60%
- Hiring freeze: 58%
- Small size of library: 56%
- Inability to fast track candidates: 56%
- Inadeq. qualified candidate pool: 52%
- Inadeq. pay: 52%
- Inadeq. MLIS leadership training: 50%
- Elimination of mid-level positions: 50%



Recruitment

- Gov't libraries hiring less, less likely to have problems recruiting
 - 17% have increased recruit. need vs. 5 years ago
 - 17% recruited in 2002
 - 17% have poor current ability to recruit
- Compare with CARL libraries:
 - 73% have increased recruit. need
 - 85% recruited in 2002
 - 8% have poor current ability to recruit
- 6 in 10 librarians applied for special libraries as first job
 - 7 in 10 to academic libraries



Library Staff Demand

- Increased libr. demand over past 5 years
 - Gov't: 58%
 - CARL: 96%
 - National average: 76%
- Predict increased libr. need next 5 years
 - Gov't: 70%
 - CARL: 96%
 - National average: 77%
- Predict increase para. need next 5 years
 - Gov't 72%
 - CARL & National: 81%



Recruitment Barriers

- Budget restraints: 83%
- Small library size : 66%
- Org. hiring freeze: 60%
- Need for bilingual staff: 52%
- Ext. hiring restrictions: 50%
- Inadeq. pay: 46%
- Canadian competition: 44%
- Inadeq. interested pool: 37%
- U.S. competition: 35%
- Inadeq. qualified pool: 33%
- Geographic location: 30%
- Inadeq. MLIS education: 26%



Most Important and Difficult to Fulfill Competencies When Recruiting

- Innovativeness
- Leadership potential
- Managerial skills
- Ability to handle high-volume workload
- Ability to respond flexibly to change
- People skills
- Communication skills
- Ability to deal with a range of users
- Years of experience*
- Generalist skills*

Noted by other sectors: entrepreneurial and technology skills



Promotional Opportunities

Librarians agreeing job offers career advancement opportunities:

	New	Mid-car.	Sr.
Gov't	58%	60%	74%
CARL	66%	81%	81%
National	65%	74%	76%

Institutions agreeing they offer good/excellent career opportunities:

Gov't:	18%
CARL:	62%
National:	35%



Future Career Aspirations

	Non-Mgmt.	Supervis. / Mid-Mgmt.	Sr. Admin.
Gov't	50%	19%	6%
CARL	26%	41%	16%



Management and Leadership

- Government librarians are more likely to be interested in:
 - seeking out new project opportunities: 68%
 - performing a leadership role: 54%
 - motivating others: 52%

than they are to be interested in:

 - managing a service/dept.: 37%
 - supervising others: 28%

- 50% or less of gov't librarians have the opportunity to perform these roles



Retention and Organizational Mobility

- Librarians interested in spending remainder of career at current institution:

	New	Mid-Car.	Sr.
Gov't	28%	47%	58%
CARL	55%	56%	77%
National	40%	47%	70%



Retention and Organizational Mobility

- Librarians departing institutions:
 - Gov't: 14% (8 / 10 voluntary)
 - CARL: 58%
 - National: 25% (7 / 10 voluntary)



Top Reasons for Staying at Job

- Like job: 87%
- Like co-workers: 81%
- Like workplace: 79%
- Loyalty to patrons: 61%
- Spouse works here: 53%
- Loyalty to employer: 51%
- Couldn't get job at similar salary elsewhere: 50%
- Want to stay in community: 47%



Satisfaction with the Quality of MLIS

- Recent librarian entrants satisfied with their programs
 - Gov't: 71%
 - CARL: 53%
 - National: 64%
- Government librarians more positive about their MLIS programs and ability to apply what they learned to their jobs
- Also more likely to state that the program provided a realistic depiction of the job



Employer Suggestions to Improve the MLIS

- Core technical skills: 41%
- Practical experience: 23%
- Soft skills: 23%

- More management skills:
 - Gov't: 18%
 - CARL: 61%
 - Average: 37%

- More business skills:
 - Gov't: 18%
 - CARL: 6%
 - National: 31%

- More leadership skills: 14%



Library Technician Satisfaction with Education Quality

- Library technicians less likely to be satisfied with the quality of their education (60% vs. 81% average)
- Technicians believe their education gave general skills (95%) and IT skills (70%) necessary for their jobs
- Technicians less likely to believe they were provided necessary skills in:
 - Management: 29% (40% average)
 - Leadership: 29% (38% average)



Professional Development

Government libraries stating librarians require significant training:

	New	Mid-Car.	Sr.
Gov't:	63%	35%	26%
CARL:	89%	54%	40%
National:	72%	43%	36%



Professional Development

- Gov't librarians agreeing adeq. training opps:

New libr.	Mid-Car.	Sr.
51%	61%	58%

- Types of training taken (individual survey)

	Gov't	CARL	Nat'l
Job skills:	81%	85%	82%
Technology skills:	78%	90%	84%
Customer service:	35%	50%	56%
Management:	51%	58%	51%
Leadership:	31%	34%	28%

- How are training needs determined & training assessed?



Professional Development

- 48% of gov't paraprofessionals agree they have adequate opportunities for training
- Paraprofessionals participated in training for:

	Gov't	CARL	Nat'l
Technology skills:	78%	90%	83%
Job skills:	66%	77%	74%
Customer service:	30%	55%	52%
Management:	14%	20%	16%
Leadership:	8%	8%	10%



Competencies

- Evidence of ongoing role shifts between librarians and paraprofessionals
- 82% of government libraries state that they will need librarians to perform both a wider variety of tasks
- 85% say their library will experience an increased need for specialists
- 73% state they will need librarians to perform more management functions over the next 5 years
- 79% say they will need librarians to perform more leadership functions over the next 5 years



Workload, Stress, Remuneration

○ Librarians

- 47% say workload manageable
- 29% little job stress
- 63% job allows work-life balance

○ Paraprofessionals

- 49% say workload manageable
- 39% little job stress
- 78% job allows work-life balance

○ Remuneration

- Government librarians earning average median incomes (except Sr. Admin)
- Paraprofessionals earn slightly higher salaries than average



Government Libraries and Staff

- Somewhat younger staff
- Staff estimate younger retirement age
 - Some flexibility
- Gov't sector experienced some shrinkage (retirements, departures)
- Anticipated retirements of 45% of managers by 2014
 - Increased environment of competition (CARL)
- Less org. confidence in current staff's ability to replace skills, knowledge, leadership from retirees
- Structural and environmental barriers to recruitment
 - Room for improvement: identification of leadership potential, succession plans, leadership training
- Institutions predict some increased need for librarians (less than average)



Government Libraries and Staff

- Libraries looking for:
 - Innovativeness, leadership, managerial skills, adaptability and flexibility
- Fewer promotional opportunities
- Staff more interested in non-management positions
 - Gap between org. need for management / leadership and staff interest
- Staff less interested in spending career at current institution
 - However, positive retention factors



Government Libraries and Staff

- Base education satisfaction
 - Higher for librarians
 - Lower for technicians
- Libraries less likely to believe that librarians need significant training
- Gap between organizational and staff perspectives on training opportunities
- More positive about workload / stress



Government Libraries and Staff

- Definition of core government library competencies?
 - Adaptability / generalist orientation
 - Depth of knowledge / experience in targeted positions
 - e.g., information management
- How to support these competencies?
 - How does this work with Community Renewal?



Overarching National Issues

- Role shift between librarians and paraprofessionals
- Fulfilling necessary and lacking management and leadership competencies
 - Defining how these function and are encouraged in the workplace
 - Hiring new staff with attention to management / leadership potential, even at entry level positions



Needs at the Institutional Level

- Succession planning
 - Understanding institutional demographics
 - Predicting institutional retirement rates
 - Mapping new / desired competencies for librarians and paraprofessionals
 - Determining training gaps and where they can be addressed
 - Addressing promotional opportunities / potential to work on new projects?



Association Implications

- Most of the work must be done at the organizational level
- However, some needs, such as those for management / leadership competencies could be developed through some potential initiatives:
 - increasing access to leadership education
 - ongoing management education programs
 - Entry-level, mid-career, senior level
 - national internship program?



Getting the Information Out

- Study report available for free download from:
<http://www.ls.ualberta.ca/8rs>
- Keeping informed of other work around the 8Rs to promote convergence / avoid duplication
 - CLA President's Council
- CLA study of library schools (MLIS and library technicians)



Study Sponsors and Supporters

- University of Alberta
- Canadian Association of Research Libraries
- Canadian Urban Libraries Council
- Library and Archives Canada
- Alberta Community Development, Government of Alberta
- Canadian Library Association



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Questions?

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