

## Topical Discussion Group 2: What Are the Continuing Education Needs of Professional Catalogers?

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**Recorder:** Allene Hayes, Library of Congress

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### The Assignment

The Topical Discussion Group (**TDG**) was asked to develop a list of recommended continuing education opportunities that technical services administrators in academic libraries could use to meet the more immediate education needs of their professional catalogers. Such educational opportunities might be provided by library schools, workshops organized by professional groups or organizations, and/or take the form in-house training. The list would be useful both in the short term, for use by academic libraries currently expanding their uses of Web resources or undertaking digital projects, and in the long term in connection with future activities.

This assignment grows out of the challenges to catalogers today in providing bibliographic control for remote-access online resources, which did not exist even a few years ago. New competencies are being required that go beyond cataloging and classification to include a broader spectrum of knowledge organization structures and systems, such as database design, indexing and abstracting principles, and information retrieval.

### Recommendations

The TDG divided its recommendations into five categories: Mindset and Values, Consensus on Core Competencies, Toolkit, Managing Operations, and Mechanisms. Within each category the group identified three to five recommendations as primary; these are marked with an asterisk in the list below:

#### 2.1. Mindset and Values

##### \* 2.1a. Learn, unlearn, relearn (career-long learning)

Sheila Intner said at the plenary session that in a digital age, all catalogers will need “to unlearn things we thought were true and relearn new things” throughout their careers.

##### \* 2.1b. Refocusing on access/intellectual access (“instead of agonizing over description,” Prof. Intner elaborated)

##### \* 2.1c. Setting priorities

##### 2.1d. Behavioral psychology

##### 2.1e. Accepting data from other sources

##### 2.1f. Archiving/Maintenance

#### 2.2. Core Competencies consensus

- \* 2.2a. Flexible
- \* 2.2b. Judgement/evaluative skills
- \* 2.2c. Analytic skills
- 2.2d. Cooperation
- 2.2e. Interpersonal skills
- 2.2f. Negotiation skills
- 2.2g. Virtual team for collection development
- 2.2h. Initiative
- 2.2i. Evaluative skills
- 2.2j. Partnering skills
- 2.2k. Setting priorities
- 2.2l. Responsibility/Accountability
- 2.2m. Tolerance of criticism/Risk taking
- 2.2n. Raise self esteem
  
- 2.3. Toolkit
- \* 2.3a. Advanced computing skills
- \* 2.3b. Finding data from other sources
- \* 2.3c. Cost benefit analysis
- \* 2.3d. Metadata schemes
- 2.3e. Characteristics of new media
- 2.3f. Finding data from other sources
- 2.3g. Maintenance (archiving and preservation)
- 2.3h. Tolerant of criticism/Risk taking
- 2.3i. Awareness of standards
- 2.3j. Harvesting data
- 2.3k. Vocabulary of partners
- 2.3l. Research skills
- 2.3m. Cost benefit analysis
  
- 2.4. Managing Operations
- \* 2.4a. Partnering skills
- \* 2.4b. Marketing skills
- \* 2.4c. Balancing old and new
- 2.4d. Ongoing maintenance (archiving and preservation)
- 2.4e. Learn, unlearn and relearn
- 2.4f. Value own work (intellectual capital)
- 2.4g. Supervision and training skills
- 2.4h. Cost benefit analysis
- 2.4i. Workflow analysis
  
- 2.5. Mechanisms
- \* 2.5a. Clearinghouse for workshops

- \* 2.5b. Clearinghouse for experimentations
- \* 2.5c. International/Global/Universal
- \* 2.5d. Demonstrate/Share professional learning and development
- \* 2.5e. Acceptance of Web-based training

## **Discussion**

Sheila Intner presented the TDG's recommendations and commented that the group had developed many more recommendations than could be discussed at the plenary session.

In comments from the audience, Marcia Bates said that, although the TDG recommendations were geared toward on-the-job training, they would also be appropriate for courses in schools of library and information science. Bella Hass Weinberg said that an additional skill for the toolkit is the ability to design a classification scheme or a thesaurus; Prof. Intner said that she agreed in principle. Barbara Tillett said that the scope of this list of training needs should be broadened to include all library professionals and library computer scientists.

## **Post Conference Comments from Participants**

Comment/question(paraphrased) from Barbara Tillett: Why is cost/benefit analysis repeated across categories, as well as within categories? Response from Sheila Intner: "We wanted to emphasize not only the skill itself (in the toolkit) but [also] those areas where it should be applied. If the group wishes to delete it, it should remain in the toolkit and be changed to 'financial skills' under the core competencies."

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