

Development of Library and Information Professionals

BS(LIS)

Code No. 9225

Units: 1-9



Department of Library and Information Sciences
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY
ISLAMABAD

BS-4 Year Library and Information Sciences

Development of Library and Information Professionals

Course Code: 9225

Course Coordinator:

Muhammad Jawwad



Department of Library and Information Sciences

Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad

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FOREWORD

Department of Library and Information Sciences established under the flagship of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities with the aim to produce trained professional graduates. Since its establishment, the department is offering various programs from certificate level to PHD level. The department is supporting the mission of AIOU keeping in view the philosophies of distance education. The primary focus of its programs is to provide quality education through targeting the educational needs of masses at their doorsteps all over the country.

BS 4-year program is a competency-based learning program. The primary aim of this program is to produce knowledgeable ICT-related skilled professionals. This program scheme of study is especially designed on the foundational courses which provide in-depth knowledge and understanding of the area of specialization. It also focuses on the general subjects and theories, principles, and methodologies of the area.

This new program has a well-defined level of knowledge which includes general education courses, foundational skills courses. The students are expected to advance beyond their secondary level, and mature and deepen their competencies, including in writing, communication, mathematics, languages, analytical and intellectual discipline. Moreover, the salient feature of this program is its practical learning requirement component which provides students a platform of practical knowledge of the environment which they will face in future of their professional life.

It is hoped that this program intends to enhance student's abilities in planning and controlling library functions. The program will also produce highly skilled professional human resource to serve the libraries, resource centers, documentation centers, archives, museums, information centers, and LIS schools. Further, it will also help the students to improve their talent of management, research, ICT, advocacy, problem-solving, and decision making relevant to information work in a rapidly changing environment along with integrity and social responsibility.

Vice Chancellor

PREFACE

Librarians have a far less formal structure for professional development. However, they have no fewer outlets than lawyers, health practitioners, businessmen or other professionals. The library and information professionals are more closely with their clientele in all types of environments such as schools, universities, public libraries, private enterprises, special libraries, and information centers. The specialists apply their knowledge of information with their constituents in all types of environments to help them understand and utilize the information that is disseminated profusely through the Internet and social media.

The library professionals are very proactive in seeking out and taking part in training and Continual Professional Development (CPD) programs. They attend training sessions and line up their staff to attend professional conferences, seminars, or accredited training programs. In addition, the team members train each other in essential skills of using systems or software. The new employees also receive induction training. This all makes a wide variety of CPD activities. Therefore, the library management team thought it appropriate to develop a policy that may have strategic oversight over the training and development activities available to staff and ensure parity in accessing these opportunities. For an effective and sustainable organization, its workforce needs regular training in CPD that makes them be skilled, competent and confident. The library staff and library managers need to identify not only where training and development are appropriate, but also what kind of development could be used. The provision of CPD within any library organization should be strategically informed. It should enable the library to achieve its strategic goals. The conferences, seminars, and workshops are effective on several levels. They allow librarians to discover emerging trends within their domain; share best practices; seek the reassurance of working with current trends; meet vendors and suppliers; discover new products and solutions; give something back to the profession through presentations; engage with inspirational practitioners; and network with library and information professionals from other organizations and sectors.

Dean

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All praise to Almighty Allah who has bestowed me with the potential and courage to undertake this work. Prayers and peace be upon our Prophet Hazrat Muhammad, his family and all of his faithful companions.

I am thankful to the worthy Vice-Chancellor and the worthy Dean, of FSSH for allowing me to prepare this study guide. Without their support, this task may not be possible. Further, they have consistently been a source of knowledge, inspiration, motivation, and much more.

I am highly indebted to my parents, spouse, siblings, and children, who allowed me to utilize family time to completion of this work timely. Their continuous prayers kept me consistent throughout this journey. I would also appreciate the cooperation of my departmental colleagues extended to me whenever required. Special thanks to the Academic Planning and Course Production (APCP) and Editing Cell of AIOU for their valued input that paved my path to improve and finish this study guide following AIOU standards and guidelines. They have been very kind and supportive as well.

I would also like to thank the Print Production Unit (PPU) of AIOU for their support concerning the comprehensive formatting of the manuscript and designing an impressive cover and title page. Special thanks also owe to AIOU's library for giving me the relevant resources to complete this task in a befitting manner. I am also thankful to ICT officials for uploading this book on the AIOU website. There are many other persons, whose names I could not mention here, but they have been a source of motivation in the whole extent of this pursuit.

Muhammad Jawwad
Course Coordinator

OBJECTIVES

After completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Learn what is Professional Development (PD).
2. Understand the concept of Continual Professional Development (CPD).
3. Explore the venues of professional development training.
4. Identify the opportunities and challenges of PD.
5. Explore grants and funding agencies engaged in imparting the CPD.

Recommended Readings:

1. Hines, S. S. (2014). *Revolutionizing the library development of library and information professionals: planning for the future*. Chocolate Ave., Hershey, PA: IGI Global.
2. Brine, A. (2004). *Continuing professional development: a guide for information professionals (Chandos information professional series)*. Oxford: Chandos Publishing.

COURSE ORGANIZATION

The course has been designed as easily as possible for distance mode of learning and it will help students in completing his/her required course work. The course is of three credit hours and comprises nine units, each unit starts with an introduction which provides an overall overview of that particular unit. At the end of every unit, the objectives of the unit show the student the basic learning purposes. The rationale behind these objectives is that after reading the unit a student should be able to explain, discuss, compare, and analyze the concepts studied in that particular unit. This study guide is specifically structured for students to acquire the skill of self-learning through studying prescribed reading material. Studying all this material is compulsory for the successful completion of the course. Recommended readings are listed at the end of each unit. A few self-assessment questions and activities have also been put forth for the students. These questions are meant to facilitate students in understanding and self-assessment that how much they have learned.

For this course, a 3-days workshop at the end of the semester, and four tutorial classes/meetings during the semester will be arranged by the department for learning this course. Participation/attendance in the workshop is compulsory (at least 70%). The tutorial classes/meetings are not formal lectures as given in any formal university. These are meant for group and individual discussion with the tutor to facilitate students learning. So, before going to attend a tutorial, prepare yourself to discuss course contents with your tutor (attendance in tutorial classes/meetings is non-compulsory).

After completing the study of the first 5 units 'Assignment No. 1' is due. The second assignment that is 'Assignment No. 2' is due after the completion of the next 4 units. These two assignments are to be assessed by the relevant tutor/resource person. Students should be very careful while preparing the assignments because these may also be checked with Turnitin for plagiarism.

Course Study Plan and Chart

As you know the course is offered through distance education so it is organized in a manner to evolve a self-learning process in absence of formal classroom teaching. Although the students can choose their way of studying the required reading material, but advised to follow the following steps:

Step-1: Thoroughly read the description of the course for clear identification of reading material.

- Step 2:** Read carefully the way the reading material is to be used.
- Step 3:** Complete the first quick reading of your required study materials.
- Step 4:** Carefully make the second reading and note down some of the points in a notebook, which are not clear and need full understanding.
- Step 5:** Carry out the self-assessment questions with the help of study material and tutor guidance.
- Step 6:** Revise notes. It is quite possible that many of those points which are not clear and understandable previously become clearer during the process of carrying out self-assessment questions.
- Step 7:** Make a third and final reading of the study material. At this stage, it is advised to keep in view the homework (assignments). These are compulsory for the successful completion of the course.

Assessment/Evaluation Criteria of Students' Coursework

Multiple criteria have been adopted to assess student's work for this course, which are as follows:

- i. Written examination to be assessed by the AIOU Examination Department, at the end of the semester= 70% marks (pass marks 50%). AIOU examination rules will be applied in this regard.
- ii. Two assignments and/or equivalent to be assessed by the relevant tutor/resource person= 30% marks (pass marks 50% collectively).

Note: Assignments submission and getting passing marks is compulsory, the student who will not submit assignments or is marked as fail is considered FAIL in the course. He/she will get fresh admission in the course; there is no need to sit in the exam.

Muhammad Jawwad
Course Coordinator

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Unit: 1

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: INTRODUCTION

Compiled by: Muhammad Jawwad

Edited by: Dr Amjid Khan

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INTRODUCTION

This unit is developed to teach students what is professional development, how it is important and the benefits of professional development for employees and employers.

OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to understand:

- Professional development.
- Importance and benefits of professional development.
- Purposes and various opportunities for professional development.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The professional world is becoming increasingly competitive and is constantly changing, so professional development and continual learning are more important than ever in being successful and achieving career goals. Technologies and best practices are evolving and progressing in every industry, making it crucial for both new and experienced professionals to continue developing their skills and honing their knowledge. As we grow in our careers, remember no one is born brilliant at their job. Every successful person has been learning and working at their skills for a long-time taking advantage of professional development opportunities over the entirety of their career.

The professional world is becoming increasingly competitive and is constantly changing, so professional development and continual learning are more important than ever in being successful and achieving career goals. Technologies and best practices are evolving and progressing in every industry, making it crucial for both new and experienced professionals to continue developing their skills and honing their knowledge. Professional development refers to continuing education and career training after a person has entered the workforce to help them develop new skills, stay up to date on current trends, and advance their career.

Many fields require professionals to participate in continuing education and ongoing learning, sometimes as a prerequisite for keeping their job or maintaining their license, designation, or certification. In these cases, the field likely has specific continuing education (CE) or continuing professional education (CPE) requirements which must be completed through an approved continuing education provider. Beyond continuing education, professional development can refer to many different types of relevant educational or training opportunities relevant to the professional's work. Even when not required, many professionals who want to excel in their careers will voluntarily seek out professional development and learning opportunities.

Professional development is the set of tools, resources, and training sessions for educators to improve their teaching quality and effectiveness. These resources allow instructors to further their knowledge in their subject area and allow for mentorship and the opportunity to learn new teaching techniques. Those who take part in workshops or leadership sessions develop and enhance specialized skills including technical, quantitative, and analytical skills.

Professional development refers to instructors developing and improving their skills to better meet the needs of their students. Approaches to professional development include reviewing case studies, consultation, coaching, mentoring and technical assistance. Here, collaboration and evaluation take place to enable educators to enhance students' outcomes. Achieving success in your career requires ongoing training and education, which is where professional development comes into play. Also known as continuing education and professional learning, professional development is designed to teach workers the skills needed to succeed in their respective lines of work. Professional learning is more than just training, however, and it's important for employers and employees alike to familiarize themselves with the nuances between these two terms.

1.2 What is Professional Development?

Professional development can increase your skills as an employee, which can lead to new opportunities and career advancement. Professional development includes advancing skills, traits and competencies that contribute to your success in the workplace. Professional development is improving yourself through learning and training to advance your career. Companies may offer training sessions to further teach their employees, but an employee typically works on their professional development independently. There are many ways that an employee can work on their professional development, such as taking classes, going to workshops or teaching themselves new skills. Professional development can also refer to staying up to date on new trends within your field and applying new practices to your current methods.

Professional development refers to a wide variety of specialized training, education, or professional learning intended to help professionals improve their knowledge, skill, and effectiveness. People in a variety of fields participate in professional development, and instructional librarians are no exception. Professional development is usually thought of as a formal, structured process, but professional development in informal contexts is also important and can provide different types of information compared to formal professional development. Other frequently used names for professional development include:

- Staff development
- Training
- Professional learning
- Continuing education

Professional development can take place on-site at your library, at a separate location, or online through webinars. The variety of locations makes it easy to incorporate professional development into your work schedule.

Many who have experienced professional development have a negative view of the process. It is frequently done as a one-hour workshop where an instructor attempts to pass on a vast amount of information through a lecture. This type of learning is minimally engaging and leaves many librarians with a distaste for professional development. However, this doesn't need to be the norm. Professional development can come in a variety of formats, including:

- ***Courses or workshops:*** One or more sessions on a subject matter, method, or another library-related topic;
- ***Conferences:*** Library professionals gather to discuss new research and issues within the field;
- ***Individual or collaborative research:*** Usually on a topic of personal interest, potentially later published in a research or practitioner journal;
- ***Peer mentoring:*** Working with other youth librarians at a similar point in their career to discuss issues and developments in the field;
- ***Reading literature:*** Keeping up with the latest research and discussion in research and practitioner journals; and
 - ***Online webinars and chats:*** Many organizations, such as Teaching Tolerance (tolerance.org), host regular webinars and/or Twitter chats that focus on teaching, learning, and/or libraries.

1.3 Importance of Professional Development

Professional development refers to all the training, certification, and education that a worker needs to succeed in his or her career. It's no secret that different jobs require different skills. Even if a worker currently has the necessary skills, he or she may need additional skills in the future. Through professional development, workers can learn these skills to become better, more efficient workers.

While job training is an essential part of professional development, this concept covers all forms of education and learning that are intended to help a worker succeed. Other examples of professional development include college

studies, online training programs, industry certifications, coaching, mentoring and consultation.

Professional development refers to the continued training and education of an individual regarding his or her career. The goal of professional development is to keep you up to date on current trends as well as help you develop new skills for advancement in the field.

Some professions require professional development to renew certification or licensure and ensure employees are up to standard. However, we can typically pursue professional development on our own through programs offered by educational institutions, professional organizations, or even our employers.

1.4 Purpose of Professional Development

The purpose of professional development is to allow professionals to learn and apply new knowledge and skills that can help them in their job and further their careers. Professional development is all about building your skill set and knowledge base for your field.

And professional development isn't just helpful for you — it's helpful for your employer, too. By having opportunities to learn, increase your skill sets, and stay up-to-date on industry trends, professionals like yourself increase your own worthwhile also adding to your company's overall value.

Professional development and professional training opportunities provide many other specific benefits for both young and experienced professionals. Professional development is a critical part of any professional's career, and it is especially critical for librarians. While library science programs generally do a good job informing their students about broad themes and practical skills they will need on the job, libraries are constantly changing. Instructional librarians who work with youth need to stay up to date on new instructional methods, child development research, emerging technologies, and updated laws. Professional development can help librarians keep up to date, so they can provide the best service to their community. Professional learning expert Hayes Mizell (2010) captured the importance of professional development for educators, stating that “professional development provides ongoing opportunities for educators to continue to improve their knowledge and skills so they can help students achieve. When educators learn, students learn more.”

Professional development also helps librarians become better advocates for libraries and the services they provide to the community. Being aware of trends in the information and library science field can help librarians make convincing arguments to people investing time or funds in libraries, like donors, library boards, and general members of the community. Some public libraries may require their staff to do some sort of professional learning throughout the year and may also have money in the budget to fund travel to conferences or pay for workshops. This varies from library to library, so it is always important to be aware of policies and ask if uncertain.

1.5 Benefits of Professional Development?

Professional development and continual learning will provide multiple benefits to every professional who actively engages with these opportunities, but many of the benefits of professional development will depend on the professional's specific career goals.

Benefits of professional development include:

1. **Professional development expands your knowledge base.** Professional development and continuing education opportunities can expose both young and experienced professionals to new ideas, solidify their knowledge, and increase their expertise in their field. Those who actively seek out these learning opportunities are those who will benefit most from them.
2. **Professional development boosts confidence and credibility.** By increasing professionals' expertise through professional development, their confidence in their work will increase as well. No one likes to think they're missing important skills in their industry. Professional development courses, continuing education, and training opportunities allow professionals to build confidence and credibility as they acquire new skill sets and professional designations.
3. **Professional development increases earning potential and hiring ability.** Professional development and continuing education offer both young and experienced professionals opportunities to boost their earning potential and future hire ability by increasing their knowledge and updating their skill sets. Professional credentials, certifications, and designations — most of which can be accessed and obtained online — also provide easy ways to increase a professional's value. Professionals with the right skill

sets who seek out and take advantage of upskilling opportunities are certainly more bankable than those who don't.

4. **Professional development can provide networking opportunities.** Many professional development opportunities such as workshops, conferences, and other networking events allow professionals to branch out and meet other people within their industry who may be able to help them with career opportunities in the future. When you decide you want a change or are ready to move up in your career, your professional network and the professional relationships you forged will come in handy.
5. **Professional development keeps professionals current on industry trends.** Professional development and continuing education and learning opportunities are great ways to stay up-to-date on industry knowledge and trends. Every professional industry is constantly evolving, so employees should use professional development and training opportunities to expand their knowledge base, learn new practices and techniques, and embrace new technology.
6. **Professional development can open the door to future career changes.** For professionals who are looking to make a complete career change or to pivot within their industry, new skills acquired through professional development training could be critical to opening new doors within their field or transitioning to a new industry.

1.6 Benefits of Professional Development for Employers

Employers can benefit from professional development in several ways. First, it promotes higher employee retention rates. Statistics show that the cost of employee turnover is up to 16% of the employee's annual income. This means an employee earning \$100,000 per year will cost the employer \$16,000 if he or she quits. But employers who offer professional development will encourage employees to stay with their business.

Professional development also signals competency on behalf of the employer. Some industries require workers to hold certifications. And if a worker doesn't have the necessary certification, it looks bad for the employer -- not to mention the legal challenges it poses. Professional development, however, can help workers obtain the necessary certification and learning for their industry.

1.7 Benefits of Professional Development for Employees

Of course, professional development is also beneficial for employees. Employees that engage in professional development will feel more confident knowing that they have the skills needed to succeed in their line of work. If an employee lacks a particular skill, he or she may question their work. Employees will also become better workers through professional development. By learning the right skills for their career, employees will be more productive and efficient, thus helping the business for which they work succeed.

Finally, professional development can open the doors to new opportunities for employees. If an employee is struggling to get promoted to a higher, more lucrative position, professional development may help him or her secure this promotion.

1.8 Examples of Professional Development

There are many types of professional development opportunities, some of which are listed below. Remember the specific professional development opportunities that are right for you will depend on your personal goals and, if your professional development is required for your job or license, what types your company/ organization / institute or licensing association will accept.

Examples of professional development opportunities include:

- **Attending a professional conference.** Conferences are great opportunities to learn from experts in your field, network with like-minded professionals, and have a good time. If an out-of-town conference is not possible, there are still many online conferences and webinars professionals can register for.
- **Participating in workshops.** The purpose of workshops is to bring together professionals with specific expertise to discuss problems and offer solutions. Unlike most conferences, workshops require active participation from those attending. This hands-on experience can be especially useful in learning new skills.
- **Complete your CE/CPE.** Continuing education is required to maintain most professional licenses and designations. Some people view continuing education as a chore they have to get out of the way every year, but proactive

professionals take advantage of their continuing education courses to hone their knowledge and update themselves on their industry.

- **Take advantage of microlearning.** Microlearning is an effective learning method especially useful for busy professionals. Also known as “bite-sized learning”, microlearning consists of brief learning units that give brief, focused bursts of content (usually between 1 and 10 minutes long) allowing professionals to fit short learning sessions into their busy schedules.
- **Shadow a colleague.** If the opportunity presents itself, it may be useful to shadow a colleague or superior whose type of job or skills you’re interested in. Shadowing another professional can be a positive learning experience that can offer a lot of clarity about your interest in that career.
- **Read a book that can help you in your field.** There are going to be a lot of books out there, no matter what industry you’re in. If you’re unsure of what to read, ask your manager or mentor what they recommend.
- **Obtain a Certification, License, or Professional Designation.** Obtaining a professional certification, license, or designation can help your career — and your salary. Have you ever been passed up for a job because other applicants had more training or certifications? The truth is relevant certifications, licenses, and designations for your field will only help your career. For one, obtaining a designation or completing a certificate program not only demonstrates your training and knowledge but also a commitment to your career. Companies/organizations/institutes will rightfully think you truly want to contribute to their success and thereby your success.

1.9 Conclusion

Professional development refers to instructors developing and improving their skills to better meet the needs of their students. Approaches to professional development include reviewing case studies, consultation, and coaching, mentoring and technical assistance. The concept of “lifelong learning” is central to the mission and values of the library. Usually, we talk about wanting to facilitate the lifelong learning of our library users; while this is critical, our focus on turning others into lifelong learners can sometimes mean that we neglect our own needs for continued growth, particularly when it comes to our professional learning. Yet, as a field, our understandings related to teaching and learning continue to evolve, and we must evolve with them if we want to provide the best possible instruction for the children and teens we serve. That means that we must engage in *professional development* related to our role as educators within the library setting.

Professional development is critical to growing as a reference services librarian or a library professional. Connecting to others in the youth services community through professional organizations, conferences, and social media allows you to discuss topics of interest and best practices. By setting concrete goals for your growth, you can continue to provide excellent service and instruction to users at your library.

Self-assessment Questions

1. Describe the benefits of professional development.
2. Explain through examples the opportunities for professional development available to librarians.
3. Describe various challenges/hurdles and opportunities available to LIS professionals attending international conferences.

Activity:

1. With the help of a tutor, develop a professional development training workshop schedule for public library librarians.

Recommended Readings:

1. Alaimo, R. (2004). Top six reasons to attend a conference. *Knowledge Quest*, 33(1), 34–35.
2. Barry, T., & Garcia-Fego, L. (2012). Expanding horizons—developing the next generation of international professionals. *The Australian Library Journal*, 61(1), 16–21. doi:10.1080/00049670.2012.10722298.
3. Bell, S. (2011). A conference wherever you are. *Library Journal*, 136(16), 28–31.
4. Brown, N. (2011). Advice for career builders. *Library Journal*, 136(17), 28–29.
5. Crawford, W. (2010). Conference survival in a time of limits. *Online*, 34(5), 58–60.
6. England, J. (2003). A case for conferences. *Knowledge Quest*, 32(1), 15–16.

7. Flynn, D. (2008). The value of international experience. *Journal of Business & Finance Librarianship*, 13(3), 419-430. doi:10.1080/08963560802183245.
8. Harrison, R. (2010). Unique benefits of conference attendance as a method of professional development for LIS professionals. *The Serials Librarian*, 59(3), 263–270. doi:10.1080/0361526X.2010.489353.
9. Hasty, D. (2013). Library Conference Planner. Retrieved from <http://lcp.douglashasty.com/>
10. Lyons, L. (2007). The dilemma for academic librarians with collection development responsibilities: A comparison of the value of attending library conferences versus academic conferences. *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 33(2), 180–189. doi:10.1016/j.acalib.2006.12.001.
11. Smallwood, C. (Ed.). (2011). *The frugal librarian: Thriving in tough economic times*. Chicago: American Library Association.
12. Thull, J., & Dworaczek, M. (2013). *International library-related conferences*. Retrieved from <http://www.lib.montana.edu/~james/>

Unit No. 2

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS
FOR LIS PROFESSIONALS**

Compiled by: Muhammad Jawwad

Edited by: Dr Amjid Khan

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INTRODUCTION

This unit is developed to teach students the benefits of professional development in the field of library and information science. It will focus on the continuous professional development plan and outline some specific skills that can be developed through participating in conferences, seminars, and workshops.

OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to explain the following:

- Benefits of professional development.
- Continuous professional development concept.
- How helpful is professional development in career development?
- Learning new technologies of professional development.

2.1 Introduction

Professional development is a lifelong practice to upgrade skills and knowledge to stay relevant in today's digital age. The developing changes in the field of Information and Communication Technology have made it obligatory for LIS Professionals to go to Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to update their skills. Training is considered an essential element in CPD. There are many institutions/associations/agencies organizing workshops, training programs, conferences, and seminars to enhance the capability and competency of professionals.

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) statement on the Professional development of information Professionals is that continuing education strengthens not only the knowledge and skills required for competent performance but also attitudes and values essential for the service orientation of a profession.

The success of any organization is possible only when its workforce is trained and developed. Continuous training is necessary for the professional development of employees. Professional development opportunities must be provided to them by their organization. Professional development is a key term that is used to define the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired by employees to perform effectively in their profession and to achieve the goal of the organization. Professional development is known as lifelong learning that is pursued throughout life. It is an ongoing process to acquire new information and skills.

Professional development benefits both the individual and the institution. Individual upgrades his or her knowledge get the latest information and learns new skills; all these improve job performance, reduce job-related stress and promote job satisfaction. Therefore, it becomes mandatory for an organization to assure the wholesome development of its employees. So, job satisfaction can be reflected among employees. But job satisfaction is a complex phenomenon and is influenced by various factors such as salary, age, experience, promotion, professional development opportunities, working conditions and environment etc. Professional development opportunity is a defining factor. Different people have different perspectives to describe job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is influenced by

employees' perceptiveness and expectancy. Any disparity between these results in disappointment.

The library occupies an important place in the framework of the academic system. It is not a mere storehouse of books but is a dynamic instrument of education. Without the active support of a library, the whole academic functioning will come to a grinding halt. Hence, LIS Professionals must commit to Professional development and career-long learning. ICT is changing so fast; therefore, LIS Professionals must continue to develop and broaden their knowledge and skills to respond to users' needs.

As there is a change and growth in all the fields of academics, the professional qualification of a Librarian must grow day by day. Dr S. R. Ranganathan's fifth law of Library and Science says that "Library is a Growing Organism". Society at large still has the old image of academic librarians which needs to be changed and improved in a positive direction. Library professionals have to fulfil the expectations of the users of the current era of information overload.

2.2 Needs for Professional Development

For a new librarian, occupational training begins from the moment he steps into the profession. Formal class-room instruction covers primarily generalized knowledge about the fundamental concepts and theories of library systems and operations at the time he taught at the Graduation level and Postgraduation level. Each library, however, exhibits its own unique identity composed of organizational structure, types and arrangement of information resources, user's characteristics and needs. Professional development opportunities can help the new librarian put theoretical knowledge into practice, apply generalized concepts to specific responsibilities, and become familiar with given job situations. College librarians are evaluated for their performance in scholarship as well as librarianship, and the requirements of the individual institution and the publishing industry may prompt no small measure of anxiety for new librarians.

2.2.1 Librarians need to become effective marketers:

In the past, there has been no need for. We have been the gate-keepers of knowledge, and our users have had no choice but to engage with us. Now they do

have a choice, they can access knowledge on-line, so we must engage more effectively than we have in the past. I think librarians are effective strategists, and we are good at developing plans, and services to position libraries in new ways. We must think from the user's point of view, understand their needs, create new services which are meaningful to them, and be effective in promoting or implementing them in a library.

2.2.2 Technological upgradation and policy statement for professional development:

The application of new technologies extends to the acquisition, cataloguing, collection development, circulation, reference (e-books and e-journals), information literacy education, information retrieval (databases, including full-text, electronic publishing, and consortia agreements), library services promotion, institutional internal communication, and so on. Thus, all library professionals face an imperative to upgrade their knowledge, improve their skills, and adapt and broaden service models. They have no other option if they wish to maintain a role both in the profession and by extension, in the vitality of the library as an institution.

Professional development is a vital investment. The Library and Knowledge Resource Centre is dedicated to the pursuit of learning but is it required to be a "learning organization" so that it can continually improve the provision of learning opportunities to its users?

Policy and development activities are designed to:

- Provide development opportunities essential in induction, up-grading skills required for current and future positions, attaining required competencies, and personal development related to job performance in the field of LIS.
- Enhance the standard of performance of our current job as library professional;
- Maintain and increase job satisfaction.
- Provide support for career advancement, so that the College will retain those who perform well and are prepared for possible future responsibilities in the College or outside the college.
- Improve and develop the ability to initiate and respond constructively to change,

- Maintain and improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency; and
- Support the College principles of equity.

2.2.3 Communication skills are key factors for professional development:

Librarians have to communicate all the time written and verbally. You have to be able to speak in public, there are talks and work shops and meetings which form the bulk of your interaction with the departments of the college. You have to be able to troubleshoot via the online forum, BLOG, facebook, and e-mail also. You have to communicate new ideas successfully and get support for them. You have to communicate bad news and good news. Too often we librarians are far too wordy on our web pages and not realistic about what will be read. We need to grasp that 99% of the time our users aren't interested in the 'ins' and 'outs' they just want the access/content and they want it now. We need to give users what they want not what we think they want.

2.3 Professional Development Activities which provide benefits to LIS Professionals

Librarianship is a rapidly changing field; there will always be something new for you to learn through professional development. Professional associations are a great place to find professional development opportunities. There are organizations for a wide variety of interests, and many have smaller sections that focus on specific topics like instruction, programming, or collection development.

2.3.1 Attending Conferences

Subject conference programs are developed in the LIS profession to promote discussion within the constituent group. These conferences offer opportunities for interaction with experts in the field, training, and professional growth and for peer contact that leads to collegial interaction and research. They also offer venues for publication and research presentations. For librarians with liaison duties to academic departments, conference participation also enhances the ability to discuss, with authority and credibility, developments within the discipline.

Conference attendance is a major professional development activity for librarians, but tight budgets and a desire for greener alternatives to air travel are leading many to participate in local and regional conferences and online workshops and courses. Local and regional conferences allow librarians to network with other professionals in their geographic area. Conferences provide the richness of face-to-face learning;

in many cases, they can provide networking opportunities for librarians to interact with other librarians interested in the same topics. In many online settings, participants interact with the instructors and with each other in an online forum where class discussions take place.

2.3.2 Learning New Technology

Manpower is a critical factor for library effectiveness. It is necessary to equip the library manpower with all the knowledge, skills and capabilities needed to handle library operations in the new digital environment. The new technology and the old traditional skills are the two sides of the same coin. Therefore, the buzzword for developing professionals in the present context is ‘Change with Continuity. The authorities of the College have to realize the need for the up-gradation of knowledge and skills of Librarians to acquire the relevant knowledge. There is a need to continue to teach traditional and core subjects like organization, Management, Information sources and services, etc.

2.3.3 Skilled and confident workforce

For an organization to be effective and able to deliver its intended outcomes, its workforce needs to be skilled, competent and confident. In addition, the nature of libraries, across all sectors, means that they are subject to continual change, especially in today’s digital information environment. Similarly, the political and economic environments in which libraries operate mean that we need to be flexible, agile and continually evolving. For a library to embrace change, its workforce must continually develop its professional and technical skills. It could be argued that the ability of a library to sustain itself through strategically aligning itself with its parent institution is reason enough to bother with training and development, but there are many other reasons for library and information professionals to engage in CPD and for library managers to invest in it, including:

- **Motivation and morale:** Library managers should always strive to have a motivated workforce. This is fundamental to successfully delivering excellent services. Equipping staff with the essential skills they need to perform and fulfil their roles can contribute to this. This might seem obvious, but I’ve encountered many library staff who don’t feel they have the skills to do what is expected of them. We need to respond to the ever-changing digital information environment, whether that takes the form of supporting new software or systems, providing IT support to library users, or just remaining aware of the range of digital resources available to library

users. If library managers don't invest in training and development to meet users' changing demands, they will be left with demotivated and demoralized staff who lack the competencies and confidence to do their job through no fault of their own.

- **Reward and recognition:** Because of budget concerns or other reasons, not many library managers can reward staff financially for great work or going the extra mile. However, CPD opportunities are another way to recognize achievements and reward staff for extraordinary work. For example, you might have a team member who is demonstrating management or leadership skills, even though their role might not require them. To recognize these skills (and the attitudes and behaviours that accompany them), you might invite this individual to participate in a leadership program. Or you might encourage a library staff member who has demonstrated some innovative or creative practice to respond to a call for papers for a conference and provide the opportunity and support for them to attend. While the member of staff benefits from presenting (which is also good PR for your library), they will also learn and develop through their conference attendance.
- **Career development and advancement:** There are many roles and positions available in the library, information and knowledge work, which means there are many opportunities for library professionals to have a diverse and rich careers. For individual staff to realize their potential and gain new career experiences, they often need guidance, encouragement and support from their managers. Library leaders should try to manage the talent and aspirations within their teams through strategic staff development. An obvious example is encouraging potential managers and leaders to apply for the "next" level position within the management structure. But also remember that for library and information professionals who don't want to be managers or leaders, enabling a variety of experiences and working environments can be equally important. CPD is a great way to accomplish this.
- **Team development:** While it is easy to recognize the needs of an individual, pay attention to team dynamics as well. "Change" often happens to a team as a whole, so by developing the whole team (or even the whole department) together, members of that team face challenges and opportunities together. Or you may want a team to bond and get used to working together. "Away days" or team events can be used to enable this. Team development is particularly effective for new teams or when management and leadership teams undertake leadership development together.

2.4 Professional Development of LIS Profession: Some initiative

All skills are interconnected. When you develop one, you improve another. Upskilling allows you to become a better specialist, even when focusing on general development. Whether you are an owner, a manager, a team member, or all three, it's essential to love what you do. If you don't, you'll have trouble inspiring others to improve. As a result, it's important to discover the joy of learning and upskilling your work. The positive feedback caused by these emotions will make it easier for you to identify your strengths and weaknesses. By following the advice in this article, you will be able to help yourself, and your employees, learn, grow and improve.

- Prepare only one online group or organization for LIS Professionals for one area; may be on the district level which is inter-connected to the international level.
- Open consultancy centre for librarians at the district level or University level.
- Start special coaching Institute for Information Literacy.
- Prepare an electronic list of all published books and journals in one head which is free and compulsory for all academic institutes.
- Peer Consultants and Speakers Directory must prepare at the university level.
- Arrange to meet all professionals in a month and professional activities invitations to all Library professionals.

2.5 Develop Action Steps

How can you improve your job satisfaction with your career? First, determine something you would like to change in the very short term. Then list concrete steps you can take to move yourself toward that change.

Here are some examples of action steps:

- Up-grade educational qualification by self-study / by distance education
- Search for new assignments in the current job
- Obtain on-the-job guidance from someone who is more expert in a specific area like automation
- Attend seminars/conferences/workshops
- Experience self-paced learning (books, videos, computer-based instruction)

- Pursue a higher academic degree
- Move to a new and higher position job in the LIS field
- Acquire fluency in communication and deep computer handling skill
- Read and write in LIS publications regularly
- Join an online discussion group on topics I want to learn more about
- Handle internet confidently
- Use e-books and e-journals frequently
- Attend book fairs regularly
- Acquire Administrative, Management, ICT, Leadership, Presentation, Research and Marketing skills.

2.6 Conclusion

Regular seminars, conferences, workshops and short-term training programs are the need of the day. As, is being said in human resource management, there is always the possibility of improving upon the skills of the human being. This can be achieved by participating in and organizing regular training programs for LIS professionals. No doubt, at present also several programs are being conducted at different places on different topics in LIS like digital library software, services and other training programs but it can achieve maximum benefit. There is a need to make a positive mind towards participation in these programs.

Finally, conferences and seminars at state, national and international levels have improved the writing skills and presenting aptitude of LIS professionals, and positive energy in librarians. It works as an energy booster among the working librarians.

Self-assessment Questions

1. Define continuous professional development and discuss its benefits.
2. Describe the need for professional development in the LIS profession.
3. Explain the communication skills that are key factors for professional development.

Activity:

1. Prepare a continuous professional development plan for training the college librarians with the help of a tutor.

Recommended Reading:

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Unit No.3

**PROVIDING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
OPPORTUNITIES TO STAFF IN TOUGH
ECONOMIC TIMES**

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INTRODUCTION

This unit is about professional development opportunities available for LIS professionals in times of financial crisis. This unit will also provide students with an understanding of the background information that they will need to foster, create, and sustain a budget-friendly professional development program for library staff.

OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to explain the following:

1. What are the challenges and opportunities of PD for the LIS profession?
2. How to create the need for PD and explore funding venues?
3. What is the concept of a learning organization?
4. How do learning organizations develop cost-effective plans for PD?

3.1 Introduction

Library administrators have pressures from various areas from both inside and outside the walls of the library. There are stresses on their organization due to new modes of knowledge acquisition, changes in technologies and standards in librarianship, and the expectations of the communities they belong to. Library budgets are also shrinking, and this enhances these strains on the entire organization. Libraries, however, need to respond to the constant changes through staff education and professional development, or the library will not be successful.

Library staff should always be dedicated to responding to new technologies and techniques in library science. How can they be productive, however, when library budgets do not always allow them to participate in the various forms of professional development and show growth? It is extremely important that library administration is aware of and encourages professional development opportunities for their staff. Being aware of what is out there allows you to be able to provide professional development in a manner that encourages professional growth for your staff and allows you to budget properly for learning. This unit will provide you with the background information that you will need to foster, create, and sustain a budget-friendly professional development program for your staff.

3.2 Library Administrators and Professional Development

Libraries have always needed for highly efficient and trained staff that can effectively perform their job tasks. However, in an era of tighter budgets and more demands on the skills of your staff, there is less and less money for professional development to keep pace with the rapid changes in the library profession. There is MORE need for training of staff due to changes in technology, globalization of information, and changes in standards in libraries. Job descriptions are changing with the trends in the profession and will be very different five years or more from now and the pressure to keep up and stay relevant is greater than ever.

Librarians need to be able to respond to these changes quickly and seamlessly to provide the best service to their patrons. Library patrons expect staff to be able to respond to most every need. And library staffs expect training in the newest technologies and trends in library and information science. So how does an administrator react to these needs and help provide the best educational experience for their employees? As a member of library administration, you can see the need

for continuing professional development and the need for training of staff daily. There are obvious benefits to the organization, including an increase in the quality and quantity of work of the employee; the elimination of the need for close supervision, allowing supervisors to make better use of their own time; the improvement of staff morale and job satisfaction by creating a more independent staff; and the greatest benefit – the increased efficiency of the organization by having a resourceful and flexible staff. Having your staff trained to the needs of the organization is important to the success of projects and the ability to meet a library's mission. If you are not on board to provide effective training and professional development opportunities for your staff, then you hazard the chance that your organization will not be successful.

You, the director, the manager, etc., are the catalyst for the success of your staff. As that leader, you need to challenge the skills of your employees and encourage and support them in their efforts to become lifelong learners. The better the staff, the better the services you provide. That being said, professional development should be an individual's course of enlightenment. You need to be able to mentor your staff through the quagmire of opportunities so that the institution gets the benefits of their education and the employee benefits by furthering their career. How do you foster this environment? Blakiston (2011) argues the need for libraries to transform into a "learning organization," that is, an organization in which "people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together." A learning organization is constantly looking for new modes and methods of knowledge acquisition, and benefits from having increased organizational knowledge, higher-skilled employees, greater efficiency and effectiveness, as well as a more positive organizational climate.

Leaders can help foster this environment by valuing and rewarding knowledge, trusting and respecting their employees, and incentivizing innovation, experimentation and risk-taking. Do not be afraid to try something new, expect mistakes when employees are learning new skills, and encourage your employees to reach out and seek new modes of knowledge. Your employees would benefit from new challenges, and you will benefit from having knowledgeable, highly trained staff.

3.3 Learning Organization

Braham (1995) states that a learning organization is set apart from other types of organizations in the following significant ways:

- Learning is integrated into everything that people in the organization do. It's not just "something extra" you add on.
- Learning is a process, not an event.
- Cooperation is the foundation of all relationships.
- Individuals themselves evolve and grow, and in the process, transform the organization.
- It is creative, and individuals co-create the organization.
- The organization learns from itself and employees teach the organization about efficiency, quality improvement and innovation.
- It's fun and exciting to be a part of a learning organization.

A well-developed learning organization encourages the exchange of information between employees to create new ideas and knowledge and fosters continuous improvement across all employees. Your staff become more flexible in implementing new initiatives and is more willing to adapt to new ideas and seek ways in which they can better enhance products and services. Peter Senge's *The Fifth Discipline* (1990) discusses the five components of a learning organization as follows:

1. **Systems Thinking:** The learning organization perceives itself as a living system. Every part is connected to every other part. People in the organization are aware of what they do and how it affects other parts of the organization.

2. **Personal Mastery:** Senge calls this the "spiritual foundation" of the learning organization. One focuses on the results while seeing the current reality. Understanding the connection between current reality and future goal is a key part of this. As a person becomes closer to being a master of a discipline, they see how what they do relates to the organization as a whole.

3. **Mental Models:** Allows the organization to look inward and create an environment whereby people can talk about their views effectively and make that thinking open to the influence of others in the group.

4. **Building a Shared Vision:** You, as the leader, need to hold and create a shared picture of the future you seek to create. When there is a genuine vision, people excel and learn, not because they are told to do so, but because they want to. Everyone shares in the vision that you create.

5. **Team Learning:** Team learning starts with an open dialogue, where everyone can contribute and everyone is listening and learning from one another. Don't be afraid to hear from and listen to any of your staff because they have something to contribute, and don't be afraid to contribute yourself. Team learning allows people to put aside their assumptions about how things are done and work together towards the institution's goals.

As a leader in a learning organization, you can take on several roles. One is as a *designer*. As designers, leaders are responsible for building a foundation of core values and organizational purpose. You need to provide and evaluate policies, strategies and structure to support the core values of your library and use these core values to create decisions towards your future. You also serve as a *teacher*. In the learning organization, the teacher serves as a coach and guides the staff through the process of identifying behaviours, developing mental models, and developing systems thinking approaches to problem-solving. You should encourage growth, development and true learning rather than emphasizing the memorization of policies and blind application of procedures.

You are, finally, the *steward* of your organization. You are responsible for the protection of the library's mission and ensuring that organizational values are understood and practised. You should support your staff and make sure that what they learn aligns with your organization's goals. By doing this, you are laying the proper groundwork to becoming a true learning organization.

Be aware that you need to commit to change across the board. Your staff needs to understand and be willing to try new initiatives and look at how they can make things better, not just how they cannot succeed. The organization needs to look at whether or not you have the technology, people, and knowledge necessary to encourage learning. You must be prepared to provide the training that leads to success. You also must communicate your vision clearly to your employees.

Streamline your organizational structure so that bureaucracy does not get in the way of progress. Encourage the sharing of knowledge and reward learning. Most importantly, reach out and learn about other learning organizations' successes and failures and use this information to make your program stronger.

3.4 Creating a Cost-Effective Plan for Professional Development in the Learning Organization

Some of the ideas above may seem to be pie-the-sky. How do you make all these ideas work together and how do you even start to implement them? You need to make concrete and institutionalize the tenets of the learning organization and make them clear to your staff. If they do not buy in, you will not be able to move forward with the learning organization. Even when a good learning organization is formed, you still have to worry about how to pay for the continuing education of your staff. At the start of each budget cycle, it is a good idea to meet with each staff member and discuss his or her learning plan for the year. Helping the staff member create their learning plan can offer the staff member the opportunity to tie their learning objectives to their position. You can talk to the staff member about the types of opportunities available to them and also learn a bit about their learning styles and their needs as a learner.

Having a model where multiple learning formats are available (face-to-face, web conferences, seminars, workshops, conferences, unconference, courses, etc.) allows the staff member to plot out his or her learning plan in a realistic manner. This process also helps you to plan an appropriate budget, based on staff needs and the type of opportunity the staff members wish to attend.

You need your best research skills to find the best possible training for your staff. Use your contacts in other libraries, mine the discussion groups of local, regional, or national organizations to see what is being taught, and solicit feedback from peer institutions about what the best training is out there. Do not just rely on the financial cost of the opportunity to decide whether or not it is worth attending. Sometimes the price is worth it when weighing against what your staff and your organization can accomplish through the training. You should try to allocate funds based on what the needs of the organization are for that year and which of your staff needs training the most. Be fair in who gets what funding. An unmotivated or apathetic staff member can become invigorated by attending training, and you should encourage them to participate to become a more active member of the staff.

You must help your employees to focus on their learning so that the organization gets the most “bang for your buck.” Sending a staff member to an expensive conference and having them come back with nothing but a few vendor trinkets to contribute to the library will not allow your organization to grow. Learning opportunities should also be tied to job descriptions and expectations of the employee to perform their jobs effectively. It should also be tied to the learning organization in what that employee can come back and disseminate to their colleagues.

According to Jackie Clifford, administrators should look to base workplace performance and development on five factors that the employee should ask themselves:

- What do you want me to do? Based on the person’s job description, goals and objectives of the institution, and standards and procedures of the profession, what are the specialized tasks you wish the person to do? How will the professional development opportunities obtained help them better to do the job the institution needs to have done?
- How do you want me to do it? This includes such standards as performance reviews, standards, mission statements, and training and development. Be clear on a learning path for each employee; outline in employee handbooks the expectations for the employee to grow through learning and development.
- How will you measure my success and performance? This is based on performance reviews, one-on-one conversations with the individual, and results of training. Look at how they perform in their job due to not only their daily tasks but how their job performance changes due to training.
- How am I doing and how do I improve? This involves giving clear feedback on the development process. Give the employee direction on where you, as the administrator, would like to see them improve.
- Where can I go from here? This is the growth area. What can you do to help the person develop and what training can you provide to the individual to help them grow? Providing a mentorship process throughout their employment to encourage engagement in new tasks and developments in the profession.

Professional development should touch upon all five of these aspects and be woven into the employee’s performance plan. Goals should be set for each type of learning opportunity so that the employee works to incorporate their knowledge acquisition into the workplace.

3.4.1 Professional Development Program within the Learning Organization

A properly designed training program provides the individual with many benefits, including motivation, relevancy, encouragement, and stimulation.

You should work with your staff to construct a training program that allows them to feel a sense of accomplishment and an awareness that you believe in them and their skills. You should also be able to participate in the program yourself, which allows you and your staff to share the experience and make goals together.

Massis (2004) offers helpful advice to administrators creating new training programs. He states that you should consider the following issues:

1. **How *important*** is training to your library? Ask yourself and your staff what goals you all want to meet through training.
2. **What will the *cost*** be to your library to provide a comprehensive staff training program? Lay out a budget for training. Make it flexible so that the budget adapts as training opportunities change.
3. **What are the *benefits*** of a staff training program for your library? What programs, policies, or procedures do you want to change or enact as a result of the training provided?
4. **What *kind*** of training program is necessary for your library? Should it be structured in terms of centralization, decentralization (in-house or outsourced), or a combination of the two?
5. **For *whom*** on the staff (administration, librarians, support, some staff, all staff) will the staff training program be created? Look at how all of your staff work together and send the appropriate people to training.
6. **If the staff training program is successful, *can it*** and by what means *will it* find sustainability beyond the initial year of implementation? Work with your staff to create a sustainability plan. Encourage involvement and assess learning outcomes so that the program is successful.

These questions will allow you to create the budget for training and then provide the baseline information needed to practically assess how much money to expend on the training program.

3.4.2 Assessment of Training Programs

Now that you have set up and discerned what your staff needs in training, and set the guidelines and budget for your program, you should have a way to examine the training quality based on how much is expended and the benefits that the library will have gained by the training opportunities. You should continually assess the budget to make sure that the funding levels meet staff needs in a rapidly changing environment. Do not rely on grant funding exclusively for your training program; there should be a line item in your budget to support staff training. Some of the ways to check the sustainability and success of a staff training program can include such items as:

1. Public expectations of staff and their skills – what are your patrons asking for and are your staff available to help them effectively? Is the training provided to your staff helping them best serve your patrons?

2. Needs assessment surveys and responses to them – survey what your staff and patrons want to see in services and create an action plan to train your staff in these needs.

3. Check to see that training is appropriate for the types of staff and that it is used based on need – what skills do you wish to have and what areas of improvement do you wish to fill; which staff is willing to learn new tasks and how can you use training to fill these tasks?

4. Do the training outcomes have some sort of reporting structure? – what methods do you have in place to allow the staff coming back from training to communicate what they have learned to their colleagues so that all staff have the opportunity to also learn these new skills?

You should always be assessing what you are getting out of your training program, both for the individual participating in training as well as for the library as a whole. Again, it is important to always remember that the library administrator is the growth engine of the institution. Understand the performance standards you expect from your employees. By providing a professional development program at your institution and focusing it on job performance and job descriptions, you will be able to search and focus on the best and most cost-effective opportunities for your staff.

3.5 How Professional Development Activities Affect Both the Employee and the Bottom Line

Professional development opportunities today go well beyond the traditional conference. Today, workplace learning should be more integrated into the everyday work environment, especially in libraries, where staff are expected and are expecting to be lifelong learners. In a learning organization, learning can be anywhere and everywhere, and it is up to you as the administrator and steward of your library to be aware of what's out there. As an administrator, understanding the types and modes of delivery and how you can facilitate the act of learning is a key aspect of the success of your organization. By understanding the delivery method, you can control cost, which in today's tighter library budgets is paramount.

There have been very few studies on the effectiveness of the format of continuing education opportunities for library staff. It is often very difficult to guide the method of delivery and its benefit to the institution as a whole. It is up to you to figure out what works best for each type of learner on your staff. Survey your staff to solicit information before each funding year to see what types of professional development they are looking for. The examples below are by no means an exhaustive list but are illustrative of some of the most popular forms of professional development. You should always be on the lookout for new opportunities for your staff to develop and grow professionally.

a) Conferences

One of the most popular forms of professional development is the conference. Conferences can be held locally, regionally, or nationally and allow the employee to leave the library and experience current trends in the field. What do employees get out of conference attendance? In a 2007 study, Robert Vega reported that "professional rejuvenation" was a significant benefit of attending. The more conferences people attended, the more important the rejuvenation factor became. An administrator should recognize the need for an employee to refresh their outlook through conference attendance. By attending, the employee becomes energized and excited about the profession.

Getting away from the library and listening to other librarians' experiences allow the person to have a more global view of everyday events in their institutions. There are many other benefits to conferences, including the ability to attend workshops relating to the librarian's area of the field, networking with other people in the same or similar area of expertise, and meeting with vendors and seeing first-hand the latest products and services available to libraries. Conferences provide a variety of learning experiences wrapped in one package, making them an ideal venue for

learning. Vega listed some of the negative aspects, however, of conference attendance that is significant. One is the aspect of CV padding. Many administrators surveyed felt that attending a conference just to pad their vita was not a good reason to attend and that they felt that employees who attend conferences, for this reason, do not necessarily add anything to the organization. Other problems occur when too many concurrent sessions are available and the attendees cannot make it to all of the sessions and workshops they wish to.

Another main issue to be aware of when sending employees to conferences is the cost. Many national and international conferences can be expensive, not only to travel to but also to register for. For the organization and the employee to have the greatest benefit from the conference, it is important to garner information that they can then relate to their work environment and their colleagues.

One way to do this is to solicit from the employee information about what they hope to get out of the conference they wish to attend. The employee can provide you with a list of what workshops they plan to attend, what the key points are to each session they wish to attend, and the relevance to their work or the library as a whole. When the employee returns from the conference, you can ask them to give a presentation to their colleagues on what they have learned so that all employees can benefit from their experiences. This can be a significant cost saving over sending several of your employees to a conference, and the benefits of the contents of the sessions will be disseminated to the rest of the staff, generating discussion and the creation of new ideas based on what was learned.

If session content is deemed the most important part of the attendance of conferences, you could also purchase the conference proceedings for your other staff to have access to. Many conferences record keynote speakers as well as sessions and have them posted for free or for a fee online. This allows you to broaden the learning environment to the rest of the staff. You could then solicit a dialogue amongst staff members for the staff to also learn from one another.

b) Face-to-Face Courses

There is great value in face-to-face instruction. They provide the student personal contact with the instructor and the opportunity to solicit further learning from their peers in the course. Face-to-face courses are the most traditional forms of professional development, but often some drawbacks can have an impact on the bottom line. Like conferences, one of the best aspects of face-to-face learning is human interaction. Conversations that happen during class and break times can often expand on what is happening in the classroom. The ability of staff to meet

their peers and network is also extremely valuable. Contacts made during the course can continue after the instruction ends and provide the staff member with a valuable point of contact that they can use in various other aspects of their working lives. There are several issues, however, with this type of learning.

Attendees may have scheduling conflicts that would not allow them to attend valuable courses. There is also the hazard of having a bad instructor, making the experience morph into one long and boring lesson, which can also cause issues with effective learning. Time and cost of travel to and from the venue can cause the courses to be cost-prohibitive. If several staff members need to go to a particular training, and there is a cost associated with registration, this could cause problems with the training budget for a library. One way to combat cost in this form of learning is to host face-to-face instruction in your library. Many vendors will provide free instruction on their tools and will come to the library to provide instruction to the entire staff. You could also provide instruction by inviting experts from within your library consortia or from libraries in your region so that instruction on a given topic can be provided at a low cost, allowing your staff to engage in these courses and get the best benefit while you save money.

c) Webinars

Webinars are online seminars. They have become a vital part of many librarians' professional development programs. According to Johanna Riddle, webinars are a "convenient, efficient and comfortable way to receive and deliver information". Most webinars last an hour to an hour and a half and are focused on a particular topic. Webinars are cost-effective, and most are either free or very inexpensive in comparison to the cost of travel and registration for face-to-face courses. They can be offered by vendors, regional or national associations, and other libraries. They are easy to fit into busy schedules because webinars are often recorded so that people who could not attend or could only attend part of the session can watch them later. Best yet, for those libraries that require it, many webinars give continuing education (CE) credits for attending.

The webinar software allows for both visual and auditory learning. Many webinars allow for social interaction through chat, polling, or online discussion. Almost all webinars are synchronous. Staff can join the session together or connect by themselves from their office or home. Best yet, the latest webinar software can be used not just on your computer, but also on tablets and other mobile devices, making it easy to connect and learn.

Webinars do get plenty of complaints, however. Some learners do not like having any real face-to-face interaction with the presenter. A bad presenter can plough

through their information with little thought of the audience. Technical problems, from bad audio, user error, or computer failure can also wreak havoc with a webinar for both speaker and attendee. Sometimes, attendees' attention spans can lag and their minds wander to other duties or opening windows to browse other sites. How many times have you sat in a webinar and heard someone talking to a person in their office or playing music and they forgot to turn their microphone off?

All these things can create problems and cause the unengaged or uninterested learner not to learn much of anything. It is never a good idea to send an employee to a webinar that does not fit into their job duties or is not in their interest areas. They will not learn and your institution will not benefit anything from it. Evaluating the learning outcomes of webinars can be challenging for topics outside of duty-specific skills. Webinars work well when a group gets together to participate and then uses time after the session to discuss what they have learned and how to apply it to what they do every day. This can help stimulate conversation amongst groups of people from many different backgrounds and allow for frank and open discussions about their work and their duties.

d) Library Camps (The “Unconference”)

Library camps are a relatively recent addition to the various means of professional development. These formalized “informal” gatherings allow the participants to create their sessions on-the-fly and topics can be spur-of-the-moment, allowing ideas to flow. According to Lawson, library camps are free to attendees and also “represent freedom in another, more important way by unchaining attendees from committee meetings, from agendas and speaking schedules arranged months in advance, and from huge conference centres and hotels”. The format is valuable because the basic ideas of a conference, where agendas are made and speakers are scheduled, are being abolished in favour of bringing people together to speak and listen and to work on ideas and problems that matter to and motivate them.

These types of meetings can save libraries money compared to other conferences. Often, they are offered regionally and are also no more than a day in length so that hotel accommodation are not needed and registration is often free or for a small fee.

The idea of unconference is based on the concept of the law of *Open Space*. Owen (2008) states that the basic principles are:

1. Whoever comes is the right person.
2. Whatever happens is the only thing that could have.

3. Whenever it starts is the right time.
4. When it's over, it's over.

This format is very freeing for many librarians, who often worry about the set structure of sessions, who is speaking when, and how they are going to get to everything. Sessions can have a beginning or end time, but it does not matter if they end early because the topic was talked out, or if they run later because folks want to discuss a topic in more detail. Anyone from any background can participate, allowing all types of staff to contribute their knowledge to the entire group. The biggest challenge for unconferences may be in setting expectations for the participants.

Some attendees find it hard to appreciate the improvisational nature of the day's structure. This is sometimes confusing for those used to more structured conferences, and some people find this lack of structure to be off-putting. Because topics are either organized in the initial meeting or just before the event, some attendees can discover that finding the right sessions for them to be difficult. Without one theme to guide the happenings of the day, the overall feel can be chaotic. The great thing about unconferences for the library administrator is that you can create your unconference and incorporate it into your training program for the year. The benefits to your staff are that they get the opportunity to network with individuals with like backgrounds and experiences and you get the benefits of a program that is pointed directly at what you need your employees to learn to be a successful part of your institution. You can invite staff from other libraries in your region and allow people from diverse backgrounds to attend with your staff. By having your staff participate in the organization of the conference, they also gain valuable planning and leadership skills. You can also participate and discover how your employees work, how they see their work, and what they want to facilitate change in their work in a neutral, collaborative environment.

In planning your unconference, you can have your staff collaborate with you to set up the groundwork for the success of the day. First, consider the location. Choose a location where you can have the main session room, and then several breakout rooms. This will allow conversations to occur on several topics at the same time. Second, think about diversity in topics. By providing a broad range of discussion, you can open the learning to library staff from many diverse backgrounds and types of libraries. Third, think about how to facilitate the connections between people after the conference is over. This will allow discussions to continue after the day of the conference. For instance, discussion groups, wikis, blogs, etc. can help keep people connected and allow learning to continue.

In the process of planning the unconference, try not to control the organization too much. Do not try to dictate topics or sessions because this will open up the floor to new ideas and new concepts. You set the theme and attendees should be able to submit their session topics when they sign up to attend. Lawson (2010) reminds us that when planning your library camps/unconference always remember these five base principles:

1. Library camps are informal.
2. Library camps are participant-driven.
3. Library camps are free or low-cost.
4. Library camps are local.
5. Library camps are for all types of libraries and librarians.

By being aware of these five ground rules, you can create an environment that fosters engagement, creates new ideas, and provides the freedom for your staff and others to innovate in their field. They should come back to you charged with ideas to try out to make their job and their workplace better. Book Clubs and Journal Clubs Book and journal clubs are very effective and inexpensive to create. Similar to the social book club, the HRD (Human Resources Development) Book or Journal Club allows staff to get together and discuss readings in the field and generates a conversation between groups of similar individuals about a specific topic. These clubs foster conversational learning and foster self-directed learning in a more social context.

Generally, there is no cost to the participant, and the employer's cost is minimal to none beyond allowing time for staff to participate and – in the case of book clubs - the occasional expense of the books to be discussed. There is a cost of time to the employee, however, and you should work with your staff to find out how much time the readings will take and if the reading should happen on or off their work schedules. You should encourage involvement, but not force it on the employee. Most book clubs are extremely successful because the group reads together and leads the discussion. Book and journal clubs create a zone of conversational learning in the workplace, where knowledge is not limited solely to the trainer or educator, and the conversations that occur transform individual experiences into group knowledge. You should try to create a space for conversation and encourage your employees to contribute, no matter their rank and/or contribution to the work environment. It is an open and free zone to contribute ideas and exchange knowledge acquired during the readings.

Several factors make these types of social learning successful. Several studies have concluded that people who participate like the social aspects, the feeling of cooperation and collaboration amongst the members, and the informal context of the meetings. There are three main things to consider when creating these groups:

- **Group Direction:** These groups should be self-directed. Smith and Galbraith note that group members become responsible for their learning by establishing a group format, selecting readings and discussion topics and becoming part of the conversation. They are both their own and each other's teachers.
- **Diversity:** HRD book clubs benefit by having a diverse membership. Administrators, librarians, clerks, pages, etc. can participate. Each person brings something new to the table and a different perspective on the readings. One comment from a participant was that the book club they participated in "gave members a chance to learn about more than the personal experiences of their colleagues". Because book and journal clubs base their exchanges on the principles of conversational learning, diversity of both background and experience is important to the exchange of ideas and the learning process.
- **Informal Atmosphere:** Book clubs should never be like a formal classroom discussion. Have these conversations in a comfortable place for all the attendees. Have the participants choose their venue. Do it over lunch or schedule it during a break in the action. Anyone should be able to volunteer to facilitate, and it should never be the same person running the show.

Eventually, these groups will be self-sustaining. Participants can choose their readings, organize times and dates, and facilitate discussions. You can appoint a contact person to report learning outcomes and just let it run itself. Social Media and Online Networking The value of social media as a venue for professional development is just being discovered. Blogs, discussion groups, wikis, open courses, forums, open-access journals, video feeds, etc. abound online. Most of the time, the connections are free, although there may be a cost to the institution if the software is required to access various modes of information. There is great value for your staff to develop their online presence, but how do you lead them through the quagmire to help them educate themselves?

The key to success for social media learning is the Personal Learning Network (PLN). A PLN is a personal community of practice, which an individual develops for his/herself, that allows the individual to meet and interact with a group of people

from anywhere in the world they choose to connect with, interact with, and learn from. The concept of *connectivism* is a key aspect of its success. Connectivism states that learning opportunities exist in distributed “nodes” of information resources and when linked together allow for the development of a deeper understanding than could be achieved individually.

Managing digital communities is sometimes like wrangling cats, but there are some ways to provide a structure for your employees. One of the most practical for the administrator is in the mode of digital stewardship. According to Wenger, 2009 technology stewards adopt a community’s perspective to help a community choose, configure and use technologies to best suit its needs. You provide the structures and the technologies to connect to the information and some basic forms of information and allow them to create their PLNs and plan their development online. The goal is to allow your staff the freedom to create their learning networks with feedback from you, not for you to create the network for them. Wenger suggests following these principles as you move forward in the process of technology stewardship in the creation of PLNs:

1. Keep the vision of your community’s success above the technical details of technology implementation. The technologies that allow the user to access their PLN are interwoven into the framework of this type of knowledge acquisition, but should not overpower it.
2. Keep the technology as simple as possible for the community while meeting its needs. Be aware of how easily technology can be used to acquire new knowledge.
3. Let the configuration of technologies evolve as the community evolves. Be aware that change is always happening. If you embrace the changes, so will your staff.
4. Use all the knowledge around you. Be aware of where it all comes from and allow your staff to gather the knowledge that they need to be successful.

The process of stewardship can take some time and some major planning to discover the needs of the staff and how they wish to connect to the information they need. You should be aware, through communication with your staff, of what they need to connect to people and information outside of their immediate library community and be able to provide the tools they need to facilitate these connections themselves. Recognize when a particular tool or technology to connect to information is no longer viable and be able to guide your staff to new modes of information gathering and networking.

While a PLN is a personal path to education, as an administrator, you can always direct your staff towards new modes of knowledge acquisition. If you find a blog, discussion group, wiki, etc. that you find useful to their work, you can assist them with connecting to that mode of knowledge. You should always be looking towards the trends and the latest ideas in librarianship and assisting your staff in linking to the latest information in the profession.

3.6 Conclusion

Professional development opportunities are constantly changing as the face of librarianship changes. Modes of delivery and learning preferences of individuals will always affect your employees' ability to pick up and learn new skills to remain relevant to their profession. It is up to you to mentor your staff through the process of professional enlightenment. Being smart about where, when and how you send your staff to professional development will help you acquire a more knowledgeable employee and give you a better handle on the budget for staff continuing education. Using this knowledge within the learning organization allows you to foster learning in both formal and informal ways to get the most out of your staff. You benefit from their increasing skills and what they teach you, and they benefit by being successful and more content in their professional roles.

The library administrator must be aware of the constant changes in learning styles and in types of knowledge acquisition to mentor and create a staff that is flexible, knowledgeable and leaders in their field. By keeping track of trends and monitoring what your staff are doing by way of their professional development, you can move forward quickly with changes in the profession and will be able to provide yourself and your staff with learning opportunities without breaking the bank.

Self-assessment Questions

1. Define transformation and digital transformation in the LIS profession, very necessary to give examples.
2. What challenges are facing the LIS profession in Pakistan?
3. Describe the opportunities available to the LIS profession in Pakistan.
4. How are libraries transforming their services and function in the current ICT era?

Activity:

1. Prepare a case study of challenges to university libraries in Pakistan.

Recommended Reading:

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Unit No.4

**INTERNAL BENEFITS OF PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT FOR ACADEMIC
LIBRARIANS**

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Edited by: Dr Amjid Khan

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INTRODUCTION

The unit will outline many benefits of in-house professional development programs for academic librarians. This will guide you that internal professional development not only helps academic librarians, but sharing your varied skills, tools, and practices with institutional colleagues also improves employee morale, collegiality, and organizational culture.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this unit are to impart knowledge of the following aspects of the internal benefits of PD for academic librarians:

- Structuring an internal professional development program using a peer-learning model, librarians gain a sense of community while seeing value in each librarian's knowledge.
- Knowledge management and the transfer of institutional memory through intergenerational and cross-job function learning.
- Exploring the evolving nature of the academic librarian and the importance of professional development as peer learning in the context of the local institution.

4.1 Introduction

In our role as academic librarians, we often seek outlets for professional growth and education. Additionally, our administrators, universities, and sometimes our tenure process often require such professional development. In this pursuit, we often look to our professional organizations as well as experts in our fields outside of our institutions for such development. While attending conferences and other external continuing education programming is important for library innovation and professional growth, looking inward at your own library colleagues' varied skills and resources can be equally as important for many reasons. Librarians of today come in a variety of flavours; sharing our unique knowledge across our library community through peer teaching and learning can help us better assist our patrons through increased knowledge and improved referral.

Not only can librarians learn a variety of skills, tools, and practices from each other, but encouraging these regular, organized discussions and programs can improve employee morale, collegiality, and organizational culture. Internal professional development, especially in a peer learning model (rather than trainer-trainee) gives librarians a sense of community while emphasizing value in each librarian's knowledge. It can be a mechanism for institutional knowledge management and the transfer of institutional memory through intergenerational and cross-job function learning. Additionally, because participants in internal professional development share a context for their knowledge building, (i.e. the issues and cultural specifics of their library and university), their development programming can be more targeted and thus their professional growth more meaningful. Internal professional development can be accomplished in a variety of ways including workshops, seminars, directed reading, journal clubs, peer mentoring, and more.

They can be accomplished in-person, online or a combination of the two. In addition to exploring the evolving nature of the academic librarian and the importance of professional development as peer learning in the context of the local institution, this paper will describe in detail one university library's professional development program for librarians. Furthermore, this example will offer practical ideas for both librarians and library administrators interested in developing such a program.

Many academic librarians have unique positions compared to typical academic staff. Often we have faculty status with some sort of tenure process. As faculty, especially when on a tenure track, we are expected to stay professionally active. An ongoing commitment to development generally is in our nature as well as in our

position descriptions. We do not simply have jobs, we have professions and wish to continually learn and grow within our professions and organizations. Because of this, academic librarians do not usually need much incentive to seek out professional opportunities. However, much of the focus tends to be on our professional organizations and other external means to learn and grow. These methods are not to be discredited. Many of the ideas we can teach each other in-house are ideas that we have learned outside of our walls. Innovative ideas coming from different organizations with different cultures are extremely important to spark change. Internal professional development does not replace external development; instead, it should be seen as complementary activities.

External professional development is very important even financially difficult times. On the same note, internal professional development is equally as important even in financially prosperous times. However, it seems that little attention is paid to the importance and significance of internal professional development except, perhaps, in terms of financial savings. It should be noted, that while sometimes used interchangeably, this paper focuses on library “development” rather than library “training.”

While training is crucial to institutional success, its focus is on imparting skills and knowledge as a specific “means to an end”. It is short-term and does not focus on creating change and growth in the organization or library profession. Development seeks to impart skills and knowledge that is ongoing and transformative.

Internal library training or any job training is generally commonplace as new people are hired or positions are changed. However, *professional development* as defined here, especially for librarians, often takes place outside the library or is conducted by a person from outside the institution. Even when conducted by internal employees, it is often directed by a designated “trainer” rather than giving all involved parties equal opportunity and encouragement to teach as well as learn. It should also be noted that this paper will focus specifically on professional development for librarians as opposed to support staff. This is not to say staff development for support staff is not just as important. However, in many academic settings, including the one we will examine in this unit, the professional roles and responsibilities of the librarian in his or her profession differs from staff who play a support role. This is especially true when librarians have tenure requirements and/or faculty status and are expected to contribute to their profession overall and not just their library or college.

Professional development, staff training, and continuing education for librarians and library staff have been examined thoroughly in the literature, but very little of

it delves deeply into the various benefits of internal development programs for librarians, especially in an academic setting.

4.2 Benefits and role of Internal Professional Development

There are many challenges faced by the new academic librarian the balancing of job responsibilities and professional development activities may be the most daunting. In the fast-paced world of academic librarianship, it seems almost impossible to keep up with the change. Yet this has become both a mandate and an expectation – that the information professional has expert knowledge of new information products, procedures, and services. In addition to these demands, the new academic librarian is expected to become involved with professional development activities. He/she must participate in workshops, classes, and other activities that increase his/her knowledge of the profession. Furthermore, the librarian is expected to give back to the professional community through extra-curricular activities and publishing. This expectation is reflected in the promotion and tenure process, which requires the presentation of copious documentation concerning the professional growth of the candidate.

This unit outlines some professional development opportunities for new academic librarians. We share experiences that we have had in the areas of publishing, presenting, teaching and other activities and e advise on ways to advance your professional development.

4.3 The Shifting Roles of the Academic Librarian

Academic librarians today have diverse roles in their libraries and across their campuses. We are Emerging Technologies Librarians, First Year Experience Librarians, Distance Learning Librarians, and Digital Collection Librarians, in addition to our more traditional positions as Reference, Instruction, and Cataloging Librarians. These titles reflect many different skill sets, interests, and expertise. We no longer are a group of similarly skilled people. Collectively a library institution now holds a vast and varied assortment of skills. From understanding the intricacies of discipline-specific databases and collections to having instructional technology skills, to knowing best practices for working with university administrators, our varied roles have helped us grow our libraries and our knowledge as a profession. In addition to our varied job roles and responsibilities, a typical academic library is quite intergenerational. What a new librarian is taught in library school today is quite different from what was taught 30 years ago.

Conversely, a librarian with 30 years of experience not only has a wealth of skills to share but also institutional knowledge. Librarians, even at their institutions, have a lot to share, teach, and learn from one another. Too often though, these important skills and experiences are not shared among colleagues, which prevents institutional growth and transformation.

While there have always been different job roles for academic librarians, a 2010 study analyzing academic reference librarian job descriptions showed a significant increase in the diversity of roles and responsibilities in the last 20-30 years. For example, in the 1960s nearly all reference positions were filled by reference librarians with very few other responsibilities. However, by the 2000s reference librarians wear many different hats and have responsibilities including instruction, collection development, outreach, and maintaining liaison relationships with academic and other university departments. New titles such as “Online Services Librarian,” “Instruction & Outreach Librarian,” and “Off-Campus Librarian” was now identified as “typical job titles for reference positions”. As reflected in the job titles, much of this has to do with changes in technology but it also has to do with the changes in academia, how the library views itself within the university or college institution as a whole, and the increasing diversity of our students. This is reflected especially in the many outreach-focused positions. Many universities are beginning to leave their siloed models of the past and need librarians that can work collaboratively with campus partners.

With these significant changes in academic librarianship, how do we stay current as our jobs and responsibilities change? And, how do we stay in touch with the vast roles and responsibilities stationed right within our libraries? When we leave university siloes, do we create our siloes within the library? Does the Off-Campus Librarian know what the First Year Experience Librarian is doing, how she does it, and most importantly, how they can work together? Professional organizations often lead many of our growth opportunities through conferences and other professional development activities and these are extremely important for new ideas and innovation in our libraries. However, these outside programs generally do not directly facilitate internal collaboration and transformation at a particular library or university.

In addition to the growing diversity of librarian roles and responsibilities, there is a growing spectrum of ages represented in our libraries. Intergenerational learning is also extremely important as our libraries grow and change. This can certainly occur through external professional development such as conferences and national mentoring programs. A new librarian can learn a wealth of information from any

practising librarian and the learning can also be very reciprocal as the older librarian learns new ideas and explores innovations with a younger librarian. However, when this is done inside of one's institution, not only do the individual librarians benefit, but the institution benefits through the transfer of institutional memory, organizational culture, and other institution-specific knowledge. Thus, internal development can facilitate a knowledge management process. With internal development, not only is "new" information coming into the organization and to the librarians but important existing organizational knowledge is carried on and disseminated through changing personnel.

4.4 Institutional Memory, Knowledge Management

The transfer of institutional knowledge and organizational culture is a specific type of knowledge that is not only extremely important but also more difficult to accomplish through typical staff training programs and nearly impossible through external professional development. Nonaka (1991) defines two types of knowledge, tacit and explicit. Explicit knowledge is defined as tangible or articulated information that can easily be transferred to others through the written word or verbalization. Tacit knowledge, on the other hand, is much more difficult to transfer. It is the knowledge of how to do something or the "know-how". Tacit knowledge, for example, is knowing how to be a "good" teacher or librarian or how to best work within the structure of one's own university culture. It is something that is acquired over time and cannot be explained easily. While training manuals can transfer explicit knowledge, tacit knowledge must be taught differently. According to Linde (2001), one type of tacit knowledge is social tacit knowledge and one example of the transfer of social knowledge is the transfer of institutional identity and memory. As noted above, intergenerational learning is an important feature of internal professional development. Internal development encourages not only formalized transfer of explicit knowledge as new librarians come and experienced librarians retire, but also helps to encourage social connections between librarians through informal narrative; i.e., the story telling that often happens through informal and casual interactions. That is not to say that internal professional development should not be structured or organized, but when it is accomplished through a peer learning model, collegial social connections straddle generations, as well as job functions, and informal expression organically occurs.

4.5 Peer Learning and Communities of Practice

Peer learning is not a new concept; it is something that frequently occurs informally. As defined by Eisen (2001), "peer learning partnerships are reciprocal

helping relationships between individuals of comparable status, who share a common or closely related learning/development objective”. Rather than following the trainer/trainee or teacher/student model that much of the library development literature focuses on, peer learning can transfer tacit knowledge through the social relationships one forms when in a reciprocal relationship. Much of the literature focusing on peer learning in the current professional development arena uses the communities of practice model. Wenger (2006) defines communities of practice as “groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly”. Communities of practice by definition do not require participants to work together at the same institution, but by doing so, there is the added value of institutional knowledge management. A more famous example of the effectiveness of communities of practice in organizational knowledge management is at the Xerox Corporation. Xerox company managers recognized the importance of the tacit knowledge transfer that occurred in small group informal situations (such as the lunch room) and thus facilitated a formalized means to capture and expand the dissemination of such knowledge. Because Xerox is an enormous corporation with multiple locations around the world, it is not feasible to have employees share their knowledge in person (as done in the case study) so they developed an online database of best practices as identified by the employees themselves. Xerox claims that this online database has saved the corporation an estimated \$100 million.

Like the Xerox Corporation, libraries should consider using the peer learning model of internal professional development as a mechanism for management of library knowledge, especially for tacit knowledge in the form of institutional memory and culture as well as library “knowhow”.

This is especially important as our roles and responsibilities continue to change and grow with in the library and university.

In addition to the added knowledge management benefits of internal professional development, the transferred knowledge has a shared context for the application. While professional development conferences or external development programs present ideas and information that can be internalized and transformed into knowledge, it can be difficult to apply to one’s specific library due to the vast organizational and cultural differences between academic libraries and institutions. A benefit of internal professional development is that there is a shared context for the application of new ideas.

4.6 Shared Context at Home

Whether the need for increased knowledge sharing is due to shifting job responsibilities and focuses, expanding librarian demographics or a need for knowledge management, internal professional development encourages the transfer of knowledge between librarians in the context of the home institution. This learning not only helps pass along existing institutional knowledge (in addition to new information and knowledge) but also helps give context to knowledge as it is transferred. “Situated learning,” coined by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991), suggests that learning should not be simply the abstract and decontextualized transfer of knowledge or information as we so often see at professional conferences. Rather it should be accomplished socially in the context of where the knowledge will be applied.

Along the same lines, Boud (1999) discusses peer learning in academia by comparing and contrasting academic department-level development versus university-level development opportunities. Boud says, “Well-designed university-wide development programmes are extremely valuable and are often highly regarded by those who participate in them, but they are not sufficient for internalization of new practice and implementation in another context to fully occur. There is often little opportunity to practice new skills or ways of working, the colleagues who can support or undermine initiatives are rarely involved in such programmes and new practices are often insufficiently contextualized to work in what might appear to be an alien environment”. When librarians learn and teach together at their library they have a common context in mind and will likely be able to better internalize information turning it into applicable knowledge for their situations within their university.

4.7 Conclusion

While professional development through conferences and other external means continues to be essential to professional growth and gaining new perspectives, the added benefits of internal professional development are not to be overlooked. In a time when the roles of librarians are changing, expanding, and growing more varied, we must stay in touch with our colleagues at our institutions. As we become less siloed on campus, we must make sure that we do not put up silos within our libraries. Internal professional development encourages this communication between colleagues not only in the hope to share information and knowledge, but also to inspire transformation through partnerships.

Self-assessment Questions

1. Define the concept of internal professional development.
2. Discuss the benefits and role of internal professional development.
3. Describe the shifting role of the academic librarian in the ICT era.
4. How can academic librarians learn from peers? Explain with examples.

Activity:

1. Visit the nearby university library and report the knowledge management and sharing process exists.

Recommended Reading:

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14. Towson University. (n.d.) *Towson at a glance*. Retrieved from <http://www.towson.edu/main/abouttu/glance/>
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Unit No.5

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS
AND RESOURCES**

Compiled by: Muhammad Jawwad

Edited by: Dr Amjid Khan

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INTRODUCTION

After going through this unit, learners should get acquainted with the basics of professional development needs. The main focus of the unit is to identify and explore the online resources available for LIS professionals concerning their professional development.

OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to explain the following:

- Basic functions of professional development.
- Types of resources for PD and learning.
- Professional associations and professional development activities.

5.1 Introduction

The success of any organization is possible only when its workforce is trained and developed. Continuous training is necessary for the professional development of employees. Professional development opportunities must be provided to them by their organization. Professional development is a key term that is used to define the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired by employees to perform effectively in their profession and to achieve the goal of the organization.

Professional development is known as lifelong learning that is pursued throughout life. It is an ongoing process to acquire new information and skills. Professional development benefits both the individual and the institution. Individual upgrades his or her knowledge, gets the latest information and learns new skills; all these improve job performance, reduce job-related stress and promote job satisfaction.

Therefore, it becomes mandatory for an organization to assure the wholesome development of its employees. So, job satisfaction can be reflected among employees. But job satisfaction is a complex phenomenon and is influenced by various factors such as salary, age, experience, promotion, professional development opportunities, working conditions and environment etc. Job satisfaction varies depending on the individual. For one person, salary is a factor and for another, Professional development opportunity is a defining factor. Different people have different perspectives to describe job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is influenced by employees' perceptiveness and expectancy. Any disparity between these results in disappointment.

Professional development is the activity through which professionals gain the new knowledge, skills, abilities and expertise which are required to perform efficaciously in their profession. It includes the acquisition of current knowledge, competence, development of skills, learning opportunities and career advancement. Professional development is an ongoing process of acquiring knowledge and skills. Professional development helps professionals to bridge the gap between their current knowledge, skills and attitudes and the anticipated knowledge, skills and attitudes that will allow them to meet their job performance requirements. It can be obtained through either education or training. It may entail welcoming a beginner to the profession and instilling in him or her the necessary experience, skills and attitudes. Professional development is a combination of professional involvement through committees, research, professional projects and continued education that leads to the exchange of ideas and growth of the individual in the profession.

5.2 Types of resources for professional development and learning

Professional development of library professionals is essential. Since, the users of the library are diverse, i.e. students, faculty members, researchers etc. and from different disciplines. To provide the best service to them, library staffs need to update their knowledge and involve themselves in continuous learning. Professional development is a ubiquitous and personalised form of enduring learning.

At some level reflection on practice is something you must do for yourself, since only you have had your particular teaching experiences, and only you can choose how to interpret and make use of them. But this rather individual activity also benefits from the stimulus and challenge offered by fellow professionals. Others' ideas may differ from your own, and they can therefore help in working out your thoughts and in alerting you to ideas that you may otherwise take for granted. These benefits of reflection can happen in any number of ways, but most fall into one of four general categories:

- talking and collaborating with colleagues
- participating in professional associations
- attending professional development workshops and conferences
- reading professional literature

a) Colleagues as a resource

Perhaps the simplest way to stimulate reflections about your teaching is to engage fellow teachers or other colleagues in dialogue (or thoughtful conversation) about teaching and learning: What do you think of this kind of experience? Have you ever had one like it yourself, and what did you make of it? Note that to help stimulate reflection, these conversations need to be largely about educational matters, not about personal ones (“What movie did you see last night?”). Dialogues with individual colleagues have certain advantages over more complex or formal professional experiences. Talking with an individual generally allows more participation for both of you, since only two people may need to express their views. It also can provide a measure of safety or confidentiality if your conversation partner is a trusted colleague; sometimes, therefore, you can share ideas of which you are not sure, or that may be controversial.

A somewhat more complex way of stimulating reflection is group study. Several teachers at a school gather regularly to bring themselves up to date on a new curriculum, for example, or to plan activities or policies related to a school-wide theme (e.g. “the environment”). Group meetings often result in considerable dialogue among the members about the best ways to teach and manage classrooms, as well as stories about students’ behaviour and learning experiences. For a beginning teacher, group study can be a particularly good way to learn from experienced, veteran teachers.

Sharing of ideas becomes even more intense if teachers collaborate about their work on an extended basis. Collaboration can take many forms; in one form it might be “team teaching” by two or more teachers working with one group of students, and in another form, it might be two or more teachers consulting regularly to coordinate the content of their courses. Collaborations work best when each member of the team brings responsibilities and expertise that are unique but also related to the other members’ responsibilities. Imagine, for example, a collaboration between Sharon, who is a middle-years classroom teacher, and Pat, who is a resource teacher—one whose job is to assist classroom teachers in working with students with educational disabilities or special needs. If Pat spends time in Sharon’s classroom, then not only will the students benefit, but they both may learn from each other’s presence. Potentially, Pat can learn the details of the middle-years curriculum and learn more about the full range of students’ skills—not just those of students having difficulties. Sharon can get ideas about how to help individuals who, in a classroom context, seem especially difficult to help. Achieving these benefits, of course, comes at a cost: the two teachers may need to take time not only for the students but also to talk with each other. Sometimes the time-cost can be reduced somewhat if their school administrators can arrange for a bit of extra planning and sharing time. But even if this does not happen, the benefits of collaboration will be very real, and often make the investment of time worthwhile.

5.3 Professional associations and professional development activities

Another way to stimulate reflection about teaching is by joining and participating in professional associations— organizations focused on supporting the work of teachers and on upholding high standards of teaching practice. To achieve their purposes, a professional association provides a mixture of publications, meetings, and conferences intended for the professional development of educators, including classroom teachers. Typically the publications include either a relatively frequent newsletter or a less frequent journal focused on issues of practice or research. Very

large associations often publish more than one newsletter or journal, each of which is focused on a particular topic or type of news (for example, the National Education Association in the United States publishes eight separate periodicals). Some also publish online journals or online versions of print journals. Whatever format they take, professionally sponsored publications stimulate thinking by discussing issues and dilemmas faced by professional educators, and sometimes also by presenting recent educational research and the recommendations for teaching that flow from that research.

Meetings and conferences sponsored by a professional association also take a variety of forms. Depending on the size of the association and the importance of the topic, a meeting could be as short as one-half-day workshop or as long as a full week with many sessions occurring simultaneously. Sometimes, too, an association might sponsor a more extended course—a series of meetings focused on one topic or problem of concern to teachers, such as classroom management or curriculum planning. In some cases, the course might carry university credit, though not always.

As you might expect, the size of a professional association makes a difference in the kinds of professional development experiences it can provide. In general, the smaller the association, the more exclusively it focuses on local news and educational needs, both in its publications and in its meetings or other activities. At a professional development workshop sponsored by a local teachers' association, for example, you are relatively likely to see colleagues and acquaintances not only from your school but from other neighbouring schools. Locally sponsored events are also more likely to focus on local issues, such as implementing a new system for assessing students' learning within the local schools. In general, too, local events tend to cost less to attend, in both time and money.

By the same token, the larger the association, the more its professional development opportunities are likely to focus on large-scale trends in education. You may therefore see fewer of your everyday colleagues and acquaintances, but you may also have a greater incentive to make new acquaintances whose interests or concerns are similar to your own. The event is more likely to feature educators who are well-known nationally or internationally, and to call attention to educational trends or issues that are new or unfamiliar.

Whether large or small, the activities of professional associations can stimulate thinking and reflecting about teaching. By meeting and talking with others at a meeting of an association, teachers learn new ideas for teaching, become aware of

emerging trends and issues about education, and confront assumptions that they may have made about their practices with students. Professional meetings, conferences, and workshops can provide these benefits because they draw on the expertise and experience of a wide range of professionals—usually wider than is possible within a single school building. But compared simply to talking with your immediate colleagues, they have a distinct disadvantage: they take effort and a bit of money to attend, and sometimes they are available at convenient times. Well-balanced professional development should therefore also include activities that are available frequently, but that also draws on a wide range of expertise. Fortunately, an activity with these features is often easily at hand: the reading of professional publications about educational research and practice.

5.4 Resource for LIS Professionals

Conferences and online networking opportunities create lasting personal and professional connections that can help librarians solve problems, start and complete innovative projects and programs, or even just share points of view that others potentially hadn't considered. The topics change over the years but the librarians who talk about those topics are the same and they have relied on their professional, often subject-focused networks to broach, mediate, and resolve those topics. The same librarians who were talking about automation thirty years ago started talking about digitization five or ten years ago and those are the same librarians who today talk about digital preservation, scholarly communication, and discovery systems

5.4.1 Training and Workshops

As LIS professionals we embrace life long learning. The resources listed below are one way do keep abreast of the newest information and trends within the field of library science.

- **Infopeople:** "Sharpen your professional skills by taking Infopeople training! Infopeople training is open to all members of the California library community - academic, public, school, and special." -- About Infopeople.org
- **Infopeople Training Materials:** You may not have had the opportunity to attend and Infopeople training session. No problem, Infopeople provides access to past training resources provided that cite their resources. As stated on the past training section of the Infopeople website: "Any use of the material in the Past Workshops section of the website should credit the author and the funding source (as found in the footer of most of the documents)."

- **The Jay Jordan IFLA/OCLC Early Career Development Fellowship Program:** "This program, jointly sponsored by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and OCLC, provides early career development and continuing education for library and information science professionals from countries with developing economies." -- OCLC Professional Development.
- **Special Libraries Association (SLA) Click University:** Continuous Learning to Improve Career Knowledge is what SLA's Click University is all about. Take a class, view a webinar, listen to a podcast, and more to keep your LIS skills current.
- **WebJunction:** "WebJunction is the place where public library staff gather to build the knowledge, skills and support we need to power relevant, vibrant libraries."

WebJunction values community, collaboration, and support for lifelong learning. These values ensure that all libraries—regardless of size, type, or geographic location—can effectively use and share resources towards common goals. Since its launch in 2003, WebJunction has helped more than 50,000 library staff build the job skills they need to meet the challenges of today's libraries. Membership is free, all are welcome, and it's always on.

A focus on library technologies, management, and services, along with public access in small and rural libraries, ensures that public librarians are equipped to meet local needs in their communities." -- OCLC WebJunction

5.4.2 Education-Specific Resources

LIS professionals often work in tandem with education. The resources below offer some great free webinars that will help you with community outreach within the educational field.

- **edWeb:** Children's Librarians, Young Adult Librarians, and Public Librarians are often tasked with providing outreach to local school districts and their respective communities. edWeb provides a plethora of resources to help you gain and build upon the newest and most innovation education and technology practices and resources used within the PreK-12 education community.

"edWeb.net is a professional social and learning network that makes it easy for anyone in the education community to connect with peers, share

information and best practices, spread innovative ideas, and provide professional development." -- About edWeb

- **edWeb Professional Learning Communities:** The list of Professional Learning Communities (PLC) is wide and varied. The webinars are free and you can also receive Continuing Education (CE) credit.

Listed below are a few of the LIS-related PLCs:

Amazing Resources for Educators
 Assessment for Learning
 Audio-Based Learning and Collaboration
 Blended Learning
 The Brain and Learning
 Digital Citizenship
 Digital Decisions for Collaborative Learning
 global: Sharing Education Ideas Around the World
 EdTech Innovators
 Emerging Tech for School Librarians
 Game-Based Learning
 GetEdFunding
 How Video Empowers Education
 Implementing the Common Core State Standards
 Leadership 3.0: Essential Skills for Innovative Leaders
 LMC @ The Forefront
 Mobile Learning Explorations
 Open Educational Resources (OER) in the K-12 Classroom
 Parent Involvement & Community Engagement in K-12
 PreK-3 D

- **Google for Education:** Google offers a plethora of free education opportunities. From tools to programs to training. Sit back, explore, learn, and share your story!

5.4.3 Online Library Training

- **WebJunction:** Our mission is to promote learning for all library staff by providing an open online learning community. Our vision is to be the place where the library profession gathers to build the knowledge, skills and support we need to power relevant, vibrant libraries.

- **Alternative Basic Library Education program:** Developed by staff of the Idaho Commission for Libraries, this free, online program provides basic library knowledge and skills for staff members who have no formal education in library science. These courses are organized into 3 key topical areas, Collection Development, Technical Services, and Public Services.
- **Infopeople:** Sharpen your professional skills by taking Infopeople training! Infopeople training is open to all members of the library community - academic, public, school, and special.
- **ALA Online Learning:** Access ALA's wide range of library-related online learning—covering fundamentals, advances, trends, and hot topics at ALA Online Learning. Organized by ALA Section/Unit.
- **ALA eLearning:** Upcoming webinars and online courses from ALA.
- **Amigos Library Services:** Amigos Library Services is a member-led and member-focused cooperative whose mission is to promote resource sharing and to obtain innovative services more affordably through collaboration. As members, we work together to enhance our roles as education and information providers to library users. Membership in Amigos strengthens us as leaders in our communities.
- **People Connect Institute:** Libraries and Museums, Library Organizations, and National and State Library Associations from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean consistently engage The People~Connect Institute for everything from Management and Human Resource Consulting and Coaching, to Webinars and Presentations including one and two-day training sessions and keynotes. Andrew Sanderbeck is the creator of highly acclaimed Leadership Institute and Customer Service Experience programs for museums and public and academic libraries.
- **Library Juice Academy:** Library Juice Academy offers a range of online professional development workshops for librarians and other library staff, focusing on practical topics to build new skills. These workshops earn Continuing Education Units and are intended as professional development activities. Workshops are taught asynchronously, so you can participate as your schedule allows.
- **San Jose State Univ. iSchool:** The i.School Open Classes program at San José State University (SJSU) School of Information (iSchool) offers continuing education and professional development opportunities for future and current information professionals. The exclusively online Open Classes program is open to everyone with a bachelor's degree or higher. Individuals can enrol in master's-level courses on a space-available basis and earn college credit.

5.5 Conclusion

The purpose of participating in professional development is twofold. On the one hand, it's a necessary part of working in the academic environment. As academic professionals, we are often expected to participate in the same process as teaching faculty do. This may include promotion through the academic ranks and tenure. On the other hand, you become more knowledgeable about the profession. This in turn makes you a better librarian and everyone benefits including students, faculty, administrators, and your colleagues. Professional development has also been shown as being instrumental in the retention of librarians, especially of underrepresented librarians. Other benefits include the fact that your efforts will contribute to the advancement of the profession; you will get to know colleagues in your region and around the country, and you will have the satisfaction of having completed meaningful work.

Self-assessment Questions

1. Describes the types of resources for professional development and learning.
2. Discuss the role of professional associations in the development of the library profession.
3. Enlist and explain various training and workshop opportunities available online.

Activity:

1. Visit the Internet and explore online training workshops and seminars on the topic of information literacy.
- 2.

Recommended reading:

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11. Scherrer, C. S. (2004). Reference librarians' perceptions of the issues they face as academic health information professionals. *Journal of the Medical Library Association*, 92(2), 226–232. PMID:15098052.
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Unit No.6

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES
PROVIDED BY CONSORTIA**

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Edited by: Dr Amjid Khan

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INTRODUCTION

The unit is designed to explain the importance of continuing education for librarians and staff and how it is effective in the professional development of the human resources and functions of their libraries.

OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to explain the following:

- Concept of continuing education
- Needs and barriers to obtaining ongoing continuing education
- Consortia offering continuing education
- Discuss the case study of the USA Inland Northwest Council of Libraries (INCOL)
- Elaborate and explore various activities of INCOL

6.1 Introduction

The need for continuing education and professional development for librarians and other library staff has existed as long as modern libraries have existed. As technology recasts the dissemination of knowledge, libraries are being reconceived to meet the changing expectations of ever more digitally native generations. Librarians not only advocate for, and are the creators of the library as it currently exists, but also the library that will exist in the future. Those enormous changes, which take the library from a repository and guardian of knowledge far beyond any library's ability to contain the production and consumption of information, stretch those in the profession far beyond their initial training. Continuing education throughout librarians' careers must be available more now than ever to those in the profession.

At the same time as this is occurring resources for continuing education support from libraries are becoming scarcer and means of attaining continuing education are becoming more expensive. This conundrum requires librarians and library staff to take responsibility for their professional development and to find feasible means to do so. While there are many more avenues to explore to find professional development than there were in the past, some avenues from the past continue to be viable because they are cost-effective, convenient and supported by employers.

Consortia are one of the easiest, most well-accepted, inexpensive, and time-effective providers of continuing education in the library profession today. There is no typical consortium; each is a unique response to a set of conditions. They differ because they have different types of members, are of different sizes, serve different communities, may be organized in different ways, have matured differently, and have different histories and leadership. Most importantly consortia have different program emphases. A review of the literature reveals that continuing education is offered by many types of entities and that consortia that do offer continuing education do so in diverse ways. However, a common expectation of consortium membership is that each library expects to get something of value out of the time, energy and financial resources it invests in consortium participation. Continuing education programming is a common need of all libraries and can be accomplished better by shared efforts than individual library efforts.

For professional development, inter-institutional cooperation through a consortium is particularly effective. One consortium, the Inland Northwest Council of Libraries (INCOL) has fulfilled this continuing education role in a region of the Pacific Northwest for more than three decades and continues to provide the librarians and

library staff in the region with the satisfaction of its member libraries. Advantages include cooperating in training so that library staffs share knowledge and the sharing of the expense of using professional training expertise. The recurrent professional contact afforded by the workshops strengthens the consortium's informal organizational structure as librarians understand the problems and resources of each other's libraries better.

A survey of workshop participants underscores the importance of this cooperation and its continuing need. The history of this consortium is a tale of relationships formed and continued by libraries, library directors and communities that persists into the current technological age, bringing libraries closer together in mutual trust. Consortia remain relevant as their focus turns to what they can do best in today's professional world in library and information science.

6.2 Historical Background of LIS Distance Education

The first formal academic program of library education in the U.S., begun by Melville Dewey at Columbia University in 1887, made efforts from its earliest years to accommodate those working in libraries calling for consideration of their circumstances and needs for continuing education. From early correspondence study to extension courses to telecommunications delivery to distance education, this model has continued to the present involving most library schools in the United States.

The history of such continuing education efforts is intertwined in the history of distance education offered within Library and Information Science (LIS) degree programs, summarized in Daniel D. Barron's introduction to his documentation of LIS distance education. By the early 1970s, the library profession recognized that the development of libraries' human resources enriches libraries and enables them to truly fulfil their mission. An entire issue of *Library Trends* was devoted to the topic of "Personnel Development and Continuing Education in Libraries." According to the issue's editor, "The intent of the issue, through a professional survey and assessment, is to create an awareness of some of the things that have been done, that is being done, and that is yet to be done." A wide range of continuing education options for library staff in the Midwest was compiled including the Illinois State Library's leadership and cooperative efforts to provide for individual professional development needs in the mid-1970s.

In the late 1970s, the Cooperative Information Network (CIN) in central California provided consortia continuing education to 300 libraries with a focus on the

development of human resources. Barron reported (1985) on a continuing education program using television to provide Continuing Education Units (CEU) to School Library Media Specialists required to complete CEUs by the state of South Carolina to renew their certificates. Although regional models of distance education offered by library schools did not focus on continuing education beyond the master's degree, some programs established regional models to deliver library and information science distance education.

Distance education revolved around a regional program intended to provide an accredited master's degree in library science to residents of New England. The University of Rhode Island reached out to the region beginning in 1969 through the mid-1970s to offer courses for the degree program in various locations throughout the region. James S. Healey came from the University of Rhode Island Graduate Library School to California later in the 1970s as the director of the library school at San Jose State University. San Jose State University had already begun distance education classes in the San Joaquin Valley of California to bring courses leading to an accredited master's degree in library science to those interested but geographically far from the coastal library schools of California. Dr Healey enhanced the regional program in California following the model from New England.

The program later expanded to another California State University campus in southern California, and subsequently, it evolved beyond regional sites to an online program. Even though there are several library schools which offer distance education for degree programs, not all library schools offer continuing education beyond degree programs. Today more formalized continuing education may be offered by some library schools in the form of certificate programs such as the Post-MLIS Certificate Program at Rutgers University which offers courses, either on campus or online, as part of a certificate cluster or individually, available from their website.

Today online course offerings are common in many degree programs including library and information science and the use of technology to deliver distance education is well documented in the literature. The Library and Information Science Distance Education Consortium (LISDEC), based at the University of South Carolina and established in 1990 as a result of discussion among LIS educators, did not initially include professional development for librarians or library staff. By the mid-1990s LISDEC "refocused its mission to include continuing education for library and information professionals."

The consortium was formed by library schools, state libraries, state departments of education and professional associations. Both the University of South Carolina and one of the professional associations involved, the Medical Library Association (MLA), have many years of experience in providing distance education. MLA has one of the oldest continuing education programs for professional development in the United States, dating back to the 1950s, with offerings available from their website. LISDEC facilitates access to sharing resources while not being a degree-granting entity itself. “The purpose of LISDEC is to provide several alternatives through which both traditional and non-traditional student groups may access quality LIS education.

However, some of the library schools involved in LISDEC, include non-degree-seeking students. “Some institutions may be interested in using technology for both degree-seeking and non-degree-seeking students. Still, others may use it as a way of providing continuing professional education to graduates and other professionals in the area.” Documentation of consortia offering continuing education or professional development to library staff is less common in the literature on the discipline.

Library and Information Science most commonly used professionally during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, indexed a few articles on continuing education offered cooperatively by consortia and none in the decade of the 1980s. There seems to have been a shift from the 1970s to the 1980s toward technology and away from other consortial activities. The rise of bibliographic utilities became the primary focus for libraries. As a result, the focus shifted to integrated library systems and the need to load machine-readable records into local systems. Coupled with diminishing resources, this climate may have contributed to less interlibrary cooperation among groups of libraries during this decade. “The focus shifted to an internal one as libraries sought to get their own houses in order in a technological way. Some consortia, such as INCOL, continued but documentation of their work in the literature had never been written. While the trend in the literature documents some consortia involved with continuing education in the 1970s and resumes again in the 1990s, the literature on continuing education in the 21st century bespeaks technology-based delivery rather than in-person classes or workshops.

The Kansas City Regional Council on Higher Education (KCRCHE), founded in 1962, is a regional consortium which managed cooperative purchasing and professional development for 19 colleges and universities in the Kansas City area. In the late 1980s, Larry L. Rose was the President

of the Kansas City Regional Council on Higher Education who contributed significant insight to the literature of the profession in his documentation of this consortium. Consortial professional development programs are paid for mostly out of the collected annual dues of the members or from grants. Larry L. Rose is a committed advocate of consortial professional development provided to regional libraries whose effective tests for cooperation are still just as relevant today. He laments the amount of funds libraries spent to send personnel away for conferences when consortial local programs can save the libraries significant funds.

Effective cooperation is another reason that it is appropriate for consortiums to cooperate on continuing education and staff development. In our consortium, we ask: Is it feasible? Is it important? Do the members want it? Not many programs pass all three tests. Cooperative professional development does. Even in the current technologically dominated ambience of our society, while continuing education support is “drying up,” school library media specialists’ needs include “meeting in a centralized area closer to home to reduce costs and make it easier to get away from school for just a few hours three to four times a year instead of three to four days at a time.

The solution is that Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESA) and larger school systems are forming consortiums that cater strictly to the continuing education needs of library media specialists. Most consortia that provide continuing education today do so electronically. Florida has five multitype library cooperatives. The Tampa Bay Library Consortium (TBLC) is comprised of public, academic, special, and school libraries serving a third of Florida’s population. Their website states “All TBLC workshops are offered free of charge to staff working in Florida Libraries. Those who do not work in libraries may participate for a fee.

The workshops are online. State libraries may offer continuing education. Both the Washington State Library and the Idaho Commission for Libraries (formerly, the Idaho State Library) send specialists throughout their respective states to present workshops. Links to local resources, courses and webinars are offered to their constituents from their websites. Professional associations in the U.S. and Canada also offer online continuing education to members. The Partnership is a consortium of provincial and territorial library associations in Canada offering continuing education through their Education Institute. The Education Institute web page offers face-to-face workshops as well as audio, web and online continuing education. The learning programs of The Partnership year-round are offered coast-to-coast through teleconference, Webcast and on-line. The American Library Association promotes continuing education as well as offers

conference workshops and online courses. However, going to conferences may not be feasible for all librarians or support staff and online professional development may not be desirable for all.

Today in the early decades of the 21st Century professional development remains a key priority in Library and Information Science. However, more often it is either not supported or under-supported by libraries. Conferences of national and state professional organizations and travel are increasingly more expensive and many libraries do not provide professional development budgets, or only provide limited budgets. Left to their own devices, college and university administrators, like most other professionals, will not place sufficient emphasis on the importance of professional development and, as a result, will not plan for it carefully and systematically. Rose's findings are still valid today as they were nearly 25 years ago. Unsupported by employers, access to professional development is increasingly a personal responsibility of the librarian or library staff member. Research involving school library media specialists demonstrates that the individual bears primary responsibility for continuing professional development. Respondents to surveys in two states indicated that they used multiple types of continuing education providers to meet their needs, and that time, distance, cost, convenience and relevance were factors important to them in choices for continuing education venues. Encouragement from their administrations and release time were considered incentives. However, in the discussion of providers of continuing education, the centrality of the continuing education consumer is sometimes forgotten.

CE offerings are not tailored to meet the needs and constraints of their potential audiences. Professional reading is and always has been an alternative. Professional organizations offer online workshops to members for a fee. There are free webinars, low-cost webinars, and social networking available online. More and more electronic learning promises cheap access to continuing education. The most recent trends in library and information science are in this direction. Because e-learning is best suited to learners with strong, independent learning and motivation skills, it is well suited to highly trained professionals engaging in continuing professional development.

However, when comparing e-learning to face-face learning, there are disadvantages as well as advantages. As younger librarians enter the profession, their preferences may be different those of librarians currently in the profession. A study of graduate students in multiple disciplines shows that despite considerable variation in experience with information literacy. Library professionals have always interacted

and collaborated through conference meetings, professional publications and other venues. An array of venues for continuing education include library associations, library consortia, library-related organizations, commercial vendors, social networking and open courseware in today's marketplace. In regions with consortia, quality programs featuring state, regional or national speakers often offered may also be a means to networking and professional development that is employer-sponsored, convenient and cost-effective. Regional solutions to continuing education are well worth the effort providing convenience and in-person networking that fosters relationships among the staff of libraries in a given locality. The Inland Northwest in the Pacific Northwest region of the United States is a fine example of just such a locality served successfully and consistently by the Inland Northwest Council of Libraries (INCOL), a consortium which has offered continuing education to its constituency since 1981.

6.3 Solutions and Recommendations

Since the beginning of the profession of library and information science, continuing education has existed. The staff of libraries have continuously over the decades asked for consideration of their circumstances and accommodation of their needs for continuing education. These circumstances and these needs are as old as the profession itself. Perhaps the more things change, the more they remain the same in some sense. While travel may be easier than in Melville Dewey's days, and technology offers new avenues for continuing education delivery than existed then, in some ways continuing education may be even more complex to obtain, and more expensive. Complex solutions may be appropriate for some types of continuing education, but basic continuing education needs continue as well. Many people in the United States, Canada, and other countries live in rural areas that are not population-dense. The staff of libraries serving these areas need continuing education as much as those in libraries in urban centres where congestion may slow travel and distances may be shorter to venues for continuing education.

Continuing education needs to be provided for all of these circumstances. Various means of providing continuing education have evolved over the decades of the library profession's existence. There may be more choices now than ever before. Not every choice will work for the circumstances of every library or librarian, but some choices will be feasible. We live in a time when the economic climate is not what it was in the 1960s when libraries had plenty of money to figure out how to spend. Today many working in libraries must fend for themselves in obtaining continuing education while others are still fortunate enough to work in libraries that

supply funds for some continuing education. There must be a way to meet the needs of library staff in all these circumstances. Consortia have been around in the library profession since the 1970s and have often had foci other than continuing education. But many have also provided continuing education because it was one of the endeavours they can do with collaboration better than each library on its own. Consortia can be created relatively easily with collaborative models in place that can be followed, and they can provide continuing education for a region that is most-effective, convenient, high-quality, and consistent for their constituency. This author recommends that consortia should continue to stand in the gap for those who might not otherwise be able to obtain consistent continuing education. As in the INCOL model, perhaps continuing education should remain as their *raison d'être* into the 21st Century. This among other options, both technological and requiring travel, should remain as choice for library staff.

6.4 Future Directions

Having examined the literature on consortia and their roles in continuing education for library and information science from the 1970s through 2012, the findings indicate that consortia serve the continuing education needs of staff in all types of libraries well where they are available. It may be useful to re-examine this model as libraries move into the future. Similar qualitative, as well as quantitative studies, may be necessary to ascertain if this type of provision is sustainable in the decades to come, as libraries change in the future.

In the 21st Century, the digital revolution shows no signs of abating which may require rethinking the core of what it means to be a library and what the continuing education needs of the future library staff will be. As fundamental forms of information evolve, older forms will persist, requiring even greater range and nimbleness from librarians in research and in teaching research to patrons. Regarding research methodology, while the value of tapping into participants' self-reported gains, preferences and experiences are important, the subsequent methodology might address outcomes based assessment. Adding another dimension of measurement of actual learning and impact on job performance could or should be thought about.

It seems likely that the economic climate of the early 21st Century does not portend more lavish library budgets to support professional development. While technology offers convenience to some, it has drawbacks including expense and, for some library staff, accessibility to dedicated time, space and computers. It may seem old-fashioned to think that personal relationships and social interaction are important,

but to most library staff in the studies mentioned these are highly valued characteristics of meaningful continuing education experiences. The future of libraries is collaboration as it has always been and interpersonal collaboration will continue to be valued.

For consortiums that exist or are formed in the future, documentation in the literature of their purpose and their role in continuing education is encouraged. It is with future studies that comparison can be accomplished through documented and accessible literature.

6.5 Conclusion

Studies in the literature among school library media specialists reveal the same concerns as the survey of INCOL public, academic and special librarians regarding the need for and access to continuing education. All prefer minimum travel, minimum time away from their job site, convenience, affordability, employer support and relevant programming as they ask for professional development to further their careers and their effectiveness in their libraries. Most prefer the interpersonal relationships developed over years through person-to-person contact and the networking component gained from live workshops.

Consortia which offers effective cooperation with a clear mission to provide for the ongoing continuing education needs of their constituency and fulfil the four essential reasons for such collaboration. It is important, it is needed, it is wanted and it is feasible. We can learn from this model that sometimes older ways of delivering services needed by library staff may save libraries money, take advantage of expertise each cannot afford alone and are feasible, satisfying and acceptable to both library administrators and library staff. Regional delivery of continuing education, provided periodically and consistently by a regional consortium of member libraries is still a good and viable model in today's technological environment.

Self-assessment Questions

1. Briefly explain the library consortia.
2. Discuss the various activities of consortia concerning professional development
3. Explain with examples the different programs INCOL

Activity:

1. Develop with the help of a tutor a library consortium of university libraries for providing professional development.

Recommended Reading:

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Unit No. 7

**FREE OR EXTERNALLY FUNDED PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

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INTRODUCTION

The unit is developed to educate librarians and students about the importance of professional development and how that can go for training, workshops, seminars and other activities in the paucity of funds. It is also the objective of this unit to explore how librarians can overcome budgets.

OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to explain the following:

1. Free and externally funded professional development issues, controversies, and problems.
2. Role of social media in professional development.
3. From where librarians look for free professional development.
4. How external funding can be achieved.

7.1 Introduction

Professional development means investing in the people who work in our libraries. It means believing in the people who work for you and with you enough to spend the resources to enable them to learn new skills and update the skills they already have. Professional development means that you do not stop learning once you have been hired and have accepted a job. There is no question as to the importance of professional development. However, with the economy and library budgets the way they are, library managers and human resources professionals increasingly seek external funding sources to help make it possible.

The concept of a “Personal Learning Network,” or PLN, also appears consistently in the literature on this topic. Stranack (2012) defines a PLN as “your very own online community of practice: a group of people from anywhere in the world that you choose to connect with, interact with, and learn from”. Stranack seems to make the assumption that the people in a PLN are communicating via the internet through e-mail, social media or whichever way the individuals involved choose to interact online. Another researcher Judith Way (2012) describes how to develop a PLN in her article, “Developing a Personal Learning Network for Fast and Free Professional Learning,” and goes on to explain that, “to keep up with all the changes in thinking and the possibilities that technology provides, we need to do a lot of research. Your PLN can bring the news and views to you, rather than you having to search them out”.

Way also provides a particularly eloquent quote from a school librarian: “Developing a personal learning network has never been so important. Networking is a powerful way of having the best and most relevant resources come to you”. PLN is part of the vocabulary being used to discuss professional development.

As exemplified by the above quotes, the field of librarianship is ever-expanding and changing, from exploding internet and media technologies, to ever-diverse patron groups with increasingly complex information needs. Library professionals need to be as savvy as the clients they serve, and the most productive and effective way for librarians to keep up with these changes is to seek out professional development opportunities. Librarians owe it to their clients and to themselves as competent professionals, to remain abreast of trends and developments in the field. Technology and media have ushered in a new era of LIS education, allowing the field to reach and educate individuals who previously did not have access. And with these new technologies and opportunities come new considerations and concerns

about the best ways in which to deliver content and instruct future library professionals.

7.2 Free and Externally Funded Professional Development: Issues, Controversies, Problems

Professional development for librarians does not seem to be controversial unless there is a controversy over how to fund it. As mentioned earlier, “The Connected Librarian: Using Social Media for ‘Do It Yourself Professional Development,’” Stranack (2012) puts his finger on the problem when he writes, “one of the first items to go during a time of financial restraint can be the professional development budget line, limiting the availability of work-funded conference participation, travel, journal subscriptions, and course fees”.

The lack of funding for conference attendance is a problem because librarians need the benefits that conference attendance provides, especially “professional rejuvenation.” In her article, “Unique Benefits of Conference Attendance as a Method of Professional Development for LIS Professionals,” Harrison (2010) writes that “professional rejuvenation” refers to “the need for professional renewal, to ‘recharge one’s batteries so to speak’”. Harrison goes on to say, “Conferences allow LIS professionals to get out of their offices; along with that comes getting out of one’s normal mindset” and regaining enthusiasm for their profession. So, we can say how valuable this professional renewal is.

Another problem is the fast pace at which the world and the profession of librarianship are changing, which leads to the need for professional development. Technology keeps changing, which means the knowledge and skills library staff need to have keeps changing. Our communities keep changing, and libraries need to be responsive to the changes in our communities. New formats for organizing, storing, and retrieving stories and information continue to be invented, and librarians need to be aware of these new developments.

New products for libraries are constantly being developed, and librarians need to know about these products and the vendors who sell them. All of these changes underline the need for professional development, and no one seems to be disputing that professional development is a good thing. The problem and controversy seem to be making professional development enough of a priority to fund it. It comes down to a money problem.

7.3 Solutions and Recommendations

Fortunately, librarians are very resourceful and creative, and there are solutions to the problem of how to fund professional development. Conference scholarships are one solution. Online training through blogs, social media, bookmarking services, e-learning, listservs, and webinars are another frugal solution. Seeking out training from other departments in your organization and from community partners are further solutions.

Conference Scholarships One solution to the problem of not having a travel budget to attend a conference is to seek out scholarship opportunities. For example, the Institute of Museum and Library Services through the State Library of North Carolina was proud to be able to offer scholarships for over eighty North Carolina librarians to attend the Association of Rural and Small Libraries Conference held in September 2012 in Raleigh, NC.

Some associations, like the Association of Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL) and the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) offer conference scholarships in several categories. For example, they offer scholarships specifically for library science students, scholarships specifically for support staff, and scholarships for librarians with five or fewer years of post-MLS experience. Get the Most Out of Your Conference. If you are fortunate enough to be able to attend a conference, here are my recommendations for getting the most from a conference:

- Go with an open mind and eagerness to learn. Having some specific topics in mind that you would like to learn about can help you choose which sessions to attend.
- Talk to other conference participants – at breaks, at meals, when passing in the hallway, etc. Use this opportunity to learn something from each other.
- Save the handouts and contact information from the conference. These can come in handy later if you want to follow up with a presenter or conference participant. If you took notes during conference sessions, keep those too.
- Write down something you learned or an idea or question that arose each day of the conference. Do this while the thoughts and information are fresh. I encourage you to share what you learned with your colleagues.

- Focus on what is going on at the conference as much as you can and leave work at work. Plan before you leave for the conference and arrange for substitutes to cover your regular duties.
- Start implementing or applying something that you learned as soon as you get back from the conference.

Do this while it is still fresh in your mind. Much of what is covered at the conference session can be adapted, applied, scaled, or otherwise used in your library, so as you absorb the information can I use this when I get back home?"

7.3.1 Blogs:

Blogs - short for "weblogs" – are typically free and can be read by anyone with an internet connection and a web browser, which means they can be valuable online professional development tools for frugal librarians. Laning, Lavalley- Welch, and Smith (2005) explain that blogs are different from other websites because they are "composed of content organized in the form of dated entries in reverse chronological order". Blogs function as a combination of a news service and a diary. Laning, Lavalley-Welch, and Smith (2005) writes that "the primary purpose of a blog is to communicate up-to-the-minute information in short increments". Blogs often feature photographs and sometimes video clips. Ordinarily, anyone can read a blog, but if you want to write a blog post, you typically need to either be invited by the owner of the blog to write a post or have your blog. Blog readers can post comments on an entry, but the entries are written by the owner of the blog or those who have been invited by the owner to write an entry. Stranack (2012) recommends, "if you read a blog post that you find particularly meaningful, add a comment to let the author know that you valued his or her post and why it mattered to you".

Examples of blogs of interest to librarians:

- UpNext: The IMLS Blog <http://blog.imls.gov/> is the "Official Blog of the Institute of
- Museum and Library Services."
- Library of Congress Blog <http://blogs.loc.gov/loc/> is of interest to academic, public, school, and special librarians.
- Free Range Librarian <http://freerangelibrarian.com/> is written by K.G. Schneider, who has been listed as one of the "Top 25
- Librarian Bloggers."

- The Shifted Librarian <http://www.theshiftedlibrarian.com/> is written by Jenny Levine, who is another one of the “Top 25 Librarian Bloggers.” According to Laning, Lavalley-Welch, and Smith (2005), “the site focuses primarily on access technology issues for public libraries with some entries related to academic library access issues”.
- The Daring Librarian <http://www.thedaringlibrarian.com/> was nominated for “Best Library/Librarian blog of 2012.”

Some questions to consider when selecting a blog to follow:

- Who is the author of the blog? Is the name of the person or organization responsible for the content of the blog listed somewhere on the website? Do you consider this person or organization to be credible?
- How often are the posts updated?
- How are older posts archived or made accessible?
- Does the blog point you toward other resources?
- Are posted entries on topic and consistent with the theme of the blog?

Blogs are especially valuable as a professional development tool because they are focused on being current and constantly updated. Blogs are a good place to get the latest information.

7.3.2 Social Media

Social media are a solution to the need for cost-effective professional development because they allow librarians to connect and learn with colleagues who may be a great physical distance away and benefit from a network of professionals for free. Some examples of social media that can be used for professional development are Twitter, LinkedIn, and wikis.

The value of Facebook as a professional development tool is debatable. Way (2012) says of Facebook, “I think it’s best for personal connections rather than professional ones,” and I tend to agree. LinkedIn tends to be viewed as a more professional social media tool than Facebook. **LinkedIn** is considered more professional than Facebook because your contacts on LinkedIn are often other professionals or colleagues and your contacts on Facebook tend to be your family and friends. Posts and comments on LinkedIn are often work-related, while many individuals use

Facebook to share their personal lives. It also is a matter of purpose – people get on LinkedIn for purposes such as finding a job, and they get on Facebook for purposes such as posting cute photos of their pets or kids. Twitter is a “microblogging service” that allows people to send and receive text messages of up to 140 characters, known as “tweets.” Twitter is useful for sending short messages. I know that at the Association of Rural and Small Libraries Conference, some insightful comments were shared via

Twitter allowed the conference participants to share comments that they were either too shy to say aloud or did not have the time or opportune moment to voice.

Social media tools typically require users to set up an account with a username and password, and we recommend setting up such accounts. The next step is to select which individuals you want to start communicating with. Who do you want to “follow” on Twitter? Who do you want to “friend” on Facebook? We recommend starting with professionals you already know in person or are previously familiar with and trust. Consider who you want to invite to be on your contact list and which invitations from others you want to accept.

Social media tools are designed to allow you to add and delete contacts, so your group of contacts can change as your needs and interests change. What types of things should you post once you have your social media account set up and your contacts? we recommend sharing success stories from your library. You can also write about what you are struggling with at your library and get support and advice. Posting about articles, books, websites, or whatever you read that you found particularly intriguing or useful is particularly important because that will help your contacts to filter through the deluge of information available and know what to pay attention to. Initially, it is perfectly okay to just be reading and listening to what your contacts are saying via these social media tools, but we recommend eventually taking the step from consuming to contributing to the conversations and the general learning of your online community by sharing your comments, ideas, and experiences. Social media are a frugal way to further professional development for librarians.

7.3.3 Bookmarking Services

Bookmarking services like Dingo and Delicious provide another free tool for professional development. These websites allow you to bookmark websites that you found particularly interesting and useful and worthy of revisiting. Delicious advertises: “Save what you like - videos, pictures, tweets, blog posts, or articles -

on topics you enjoy and search through others' collections of links to discover cool stuff!" These services allow you to organize and share the links to websites you bookmarked with others and to see which sites your contacts have bookmarked. This means that bookmarking services provide opportunities for professionals to learn from each other.

7.3.4 E-Learning: WebJunction and Lyrasis

Another solution is e-learning. As Mason (2009) phrases it, "E-learning is one way to help reduce costs while increasing participation". The State Library of North Carolina has a staff member, Jeffrey Hamilton, with the title "E-learning Consultant." When I was hired as the Duplin County Librarian, Jeffrey set me up to take some WebJunction courses at no cost to Duplin County Library.

WebJunction also provides customer service training and Microsoft Office training, which would be relevant to both public libraries and other libraries. The beauty of these WebJunction courses is that many of them are self-paced. There is no set date or time.

WebJunction self-paced courses between July 2011 and June 2012 WebJunction can be useful to a variety of libraries. Mason (2009) says it very well: "WJ now offers its services to all types of libraries, including academic, school, and special libraries as well as public libraries. We are finding that the need for ongoing training is universal and is not specific to any one type of library". Mason does not specifically mention this, but WebJunction also provides a forum in which staff from different types of libraries can interact and learn from each other in some beautiful collaboration.

LocalGovU and Alteris are two more providers of e-learning web-based courses. LocalGovU advertises that it is "affordable e-learning for city and county governments. LocalGovU provides the largest selection of city and county government-specific online training." Alteris advertises that they "offer web-based training courses. You can now invest in employee training at a much lower cost! Select from our extensive course list." LocalGovU and Alteris both provide courses that would apply to public libraries with county or city affiliations.

Some courses, like those in Human Resources, Safety, and Management, would apply to all types of libraries. One of the differences in these platforms is that LocalGovU and Altersis seem to be marketing specifically to local governments, while WebJunction and Lyrasis have a larger marketing base. Opportunities for prepaid vouchers for WebJunction and Lyrasis seem to be easier to acquire.

However, if your county or city has paid for LocalGovU or Alteri's classes, you may be able to take the classes without having to pay for them out of the library budget. All these e-learning platforms provide positive and worthwhile training opportunities.

7.3.5 Listservs

Listservs are another creative solution to the need for frugal professional development. Listservs are e-mail discussion groups and are highly recommendable for finding a professional one to join. Listservs exist for all types of librarians with all types of interests. Participants on listservs typically have to be approved and added by the listserv administrators. The Library of Congress Web Guide for Library and Information Science (2012) explains that “library listservs are usually maintained by library associations and organizations. Its subscribers are typically members of that organization or librarians with a vested interest in the listserv’s goals or approved topics of discussion.” The North Carolina Public Library Directors’ Association has a listserv.

This is a powerful networking and mentoring tool, and we continually can develop professionally through the discussions on this listserv. The directors who participate often have a wonderful sense of humour, and reading the banter back and forth between them is entertaining as well as educational. According to Gruber (2007), “while newer librarians +may not feel comfortable responding to posts at first, reading conversations without responding (also known as ‘lurking’) can be an excellent way to stay informed about professional concerns”. Listservs are another free tool in the librarian’s professional development toolbelt.

Examples of Listservs:

- LIBREF-L is focused on general library reference and is applicable to reference librarians.
- LM_NET is a listserv for school library media specialists worldwide.
- NMRT-L is a listserv for the New Members Round Table of the American Library Association.
- ALCTS is a listserv from the American Library Association, which is focused on library catalogue form and function and is especially useful to the cataloguing library staff.
- YALSA is another listserv from the American Library Association, and it is for librarians who provide services to young adult and teen users.

7.3.6 Webinars/Virtual Conferences/Webcasts

Webinars are another solution to the problem of funding for professional development opportunities because they offer a free or low-cost way to learn and engage with other professionals. As Bell (2011) points out in his article, “A Conference Wherever You are,” webinars are valuable because “librarians may choose from dozens of free and fee-based webinars or webcasts...All of them offer librarians short on money and time the chance to gain professional development and continuing education from the comfort of their home or office”.

In their article, “Power Up Your Professional Learning,” LaGarde and Whitehead (2012) point out, “when participating in a webinar, you not only get to hear great ideas from the presenter, but you can also use the chat window to interact and share with other participants”. Public Library Association (PLA) sponsored webinar, “The Elusive Non-User: How Can Libraries Find Out What Non-Users Want?” to be particularly worthwhile. This webinar was worthwhile because it talked about some of the pros and cons of using focus groups to try to find out what non-users want. The facilitators mentioned some reasons why people don’t use the library, such as that they lack the identification needed to register for a library card or the library hours and locations are not convenient to them. The webinar also provided some practical and simple marketing suggestions, like putting posters and brochures in local businesses and offices to let people know what services the library offers. Webinars are often provided through professional associations like the Public Library Association.

For those of you who are not public librarians, the American Library Association (ALA), the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL), the American Association of School Librarians (AASL), and the Special Libraries Association (SLA) are also sources for webinars. Seek out these online conferences. Many webinars are recorded and the recordings and slides are often made available to participants after the webinar.

The advantages of webinars are their low-cost, their ability to be viewed from any location, and the diversity of topics they cover. Webinars are a valuable option for online professional development.

7.3.7 Other Departments in the Organization You Work For

In addition to training via the internet, collaboration with other departments in your organization can be very useful and cost-effective. It is recommended engaging in such interdepartmental cooperation as a source of professional development benefits us a lot.

7.3.8 Community Partners

In addition to the resources that your employing organization can offer, you can look for professional development opportunities provided by others in your community that you can partner with.

7.3.9 Professional Organizations

As mentioned earlier, a lot of conferences, webinars, listservs, and professional journals are offered by professional organizations. Some examples of professional organizations are the American Library Association, the Association of Rural and Small Libraries, the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL), the American Association of School Librarians (AASL), and the Special Libraries Association (SLA). I recommend taking advantage of the professional development opportunities that these organizations can offer.

7.4 Where to Look for Free Professional Development Opportunities

- a) **Contact local colleges**, universities, and community colleges to find out if they offer free workshops, symposiums, guest speakers, or other free and open the public events that may be relevant. These schools often post their calendars of events on their websites and have mailing lists that you could ask to be added to.
- b) **The human resources staff** in your organization may be aware of some helpful free events and activities.
- c) **Community service** and civic organizations such as Rotary clubs, Chambers of Commerce, Knights of Columbus, Lions Club, and other local groups may be sources of free professional development.
- d) **Get online** and use some of the tools mentioned earlier in this unit, such as blogs, listservs, social media, and others to connect with other librarians and information professionals for free.
- e) **Join a professional association.**

7.5 Where to Look for External Funding

External funding is money that does not come out of the library's normal operating budget. County commissioners, library trustees, and other governing or advisory boards are often very impressed if a librarian can bring in such monies. Here is a list of places to seek external funding.

- Contact your State Library and look at the State Library's website for grants and scholarships. Library Services and Technology Grants (LSTA) grants are administered through the State Library.
- Foundations can also be sources of external funding. For example, the North Carolina Community Foundation offers grants that libraries can apply for, The Foundation Center's website list foundations and offers assistance with fundraising and locating grants <http://foundationcenter.org/>
- Library Grants is a blog that lists the application deadlines and descriptions of available grants <http://librarygrants.blogspot.com/>
- Professional associations sometimes offer scholarships to attend conferences. Contact the American Library Association and other professional associations to learn about what external funding they can offer.
- Some Friends of the Library groups have been willing to sponsor and fund professional development. For example, the Friends of the Durham County Library in Durham North Carolina offer a scholarship for paraprofessional library staff to help them work towards a Masters of Library Science (MLS) degree. Talk to your Friends of the Library group to find out what they can offer to make their library staff even better.
- Fundraisers like walk-a-thons, book sales, bake sales, auctions, and other such activities raise money that could potentially be used for professional development. Research library fundraising.
- Individual donors may be willing to contribute funds that could be used for professional development if you describe the project you have in mind to the donor and explain how the library and the community will benefit from your proposed project. Let such donors know what the library's needs are.
- United Way <http://www.unitedway.org/> is a potential source of external funding.
- United for Libraries is a division of the American Library Association and offers grants for libraries. For example, United for Libraries recently offered a grant for libraries with troubled budgets. The grant was intended to provide advocacy training and help these libraries advocate for themselves. <http://www.ala.org/united/>

- The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is a potential source of external funding <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/>

7.6 Conclusion

The trend seems to be that professional development for librarians is increasingly taking place online, and part of the reason for this seems to be frugality. Future research would explore whatever new technologies librarians use to connect and learn from each other. Some of the technologies described in this chapter are likely to become obsolete eventually and will be replaced with new technologies that will need to be discussed. Expansions and improvements in internet-based media for professional development are predicted. However, virtual interaction cannot completely take the place of face-to-face discussions. Librarians are intelligent and resourceful individuals who value life-long learning and find creative ways to engage in professional development despite the budget cuts many libraries are experiencing.

Membership in professional associations is vital for professional development. Professional associations keep coming up in the discussions of professional development because the associations are the ones organizing conferences, providing listservs, hosting webinars, and offering many of the other resources explored in this unit. As a library staff member, you need to make friends and form partnerships because you cannot do it all by yourself when it comes to professional development. It is noted that a lot of librarians enter the profession because they like to learn new things. Be a sponge and soak up all the knowledge you can – that is the essence of professional development. As Abigail Adams said, “Learning is not achieved by chance, it must be sought for with ardour and attended to with diligence.

Self-assessment Questions

1. Describe free and externally funded professional development issues, controversies, and problems.
2. Discuss the solutions to issues and problems faced by librarians in achieving the funding grants for training, conferences and seminars.
3. Elaborate on the role of social media in professional development.

Activity:

1. Explore the Internet funding grants available from various associations, and professional groups, and prepare their list.

Recommended Reading:

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9. Stranack, K. (2012). The connected librarian: Using social media for “do it yourself” professional development. *Partnership: The Canadian Journal of Library and Information Practice and Research*, 7(17), 1–5.
10. Way, J. (2012). Developing a personal learning network for fast and free professional learning. *Access*, 26(1), 16–19.

Unit No. 8

**LEVELING THE PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT PLAYING FIELD**

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INTRODUCTION

The unit is a case study of the American Tribal College Librarians Institute. This will provide the students with an in-depth overview of the project and build their knowledge base about writing a project and availing/winning a funding grant.

OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to explain the following:

1. Establishment of American Tribal College Librarians Institute (TCLI).
2. Professional development activities of TCLI.
3. Difficulties in the professional development of remote areas professionals.
4. Write an award-winning funding grant and project.

8.1 Introduction

The field of librarianship has a plethora of professional development opportunities available for a wide variety of needs, but atlibrary personnel who work at institutions serving underserved populations from unique cultural backgrounds may not be best served by many of these efforts, in particular, by larger conferences. The necessity of providing professional development opportunities to underserved librarian communities such as village/tribal college librarians is clear. These librarians typically serve patrons who have the greatest need for library services and who stand to benefit the most from what librarians and libraries can offer them.

In the United States, underserved communities typically fall well below average national income and education levels and are often located in rural and tribal communities. Tribal college librarians, on average, have lower operating budgets, serve a wider geographic area and have fewer opportunities to network with colleagues than their librarian counterparts nationwide. Additionally, most tribal college libraries also serve as the only public library in their communities so they have the added challenge of serving the needs of both academic library users and members of the general public. This dual role means that tribal college librarians must have the knowledge and skills to meet the information and research needs of the students, faculty and staff on their campuses, while also being adept at serving the information and programming needs of the general public. It is not unusual for tribal college librarians to run after-school and summer reading programs, as well as provide continuing cultural programming for the public during their quieter times in serving academic information needs on their campuses.

Providing professional development opportunities to tribal college library staff presents several challenges. The largest hurdle to overcome is making professional development opportunities affordable. Oftentimes, the librarians most in need of professional development have few funding resources available to them, coupled with the issue of having their travel costs to attend national events greater due to their geographically isolated locations. A flight from a rural community to a major U.S. city can cost as much and take as long as a flight from Los Angeles or Chicago, or even to a major international destination.

Another challenge lies in making the event relevant to this unique audience; targeted programming is vital and the key to providing a useful and sustainable professional development opportunity and ensuring that they want to return year after year. The needs of librarians serving a few thousand patrons in an area the size of Connecticut or those serving primarily Native American communities differ

significantly from those serving in more populated areas where patrons have greater access to other libraries and information resources.

The primary objective of this unit is to demonstrate the need to provide unique and targeted professional development opportunities to tribal college librarians and librarians who directly service tribal college students. The results of providing these opportunities through organizations such as the Tribal College Librarians Institute (TCLI) will be discussed, as will the methods and strategies used to coordinate, fund and facilitate an international institute aimed at meeting the professional development needs of tribal college librarians.

8.2 Tribal Colleges in America

In the United States, there are currently 37 tribal colleges and universities (TCUs) spread over 14 states that are recognized through the Native American Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), a support network for tribal colleges formed in 1972. The first tribal college was Diné College founded by the Navajo Nation in 1968. It was founded “to encourage Navajo youth to become contributing members of the Navajo Nation and the world society”. The 36 tribal colleges that followed the Navajo example were founded for similar reasons. Arguably the importance was so that the tribes could take control of their education and futures.

A report by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching identified three primary reasons for the creation of tribally controlled institutions of higher education (1) “preserving and communicating tribal culture,” (2) “enhancing economic opportunity within the tribal community,” and (3) “improving health care at the community level”.

Tribal colleges generally serve geographically isolated populations that have few other options for accessing higher education opportunities if they wish to remain in their communities. In terms of the need, the numbers speak for themselves. There are 564 federally recognized tribes, 334 reservations and 37 tribal colleges.

They often serve as community centres and provide diverse services to local farmers, ranchers and business owners. In addition, they help create educated and skilled Native American youth that will become future community leaders, innovators and role models. Tribal college libraries, like any academic library, are the heart or core of their universities, supporting the information needs of all of the academic programs on their campuses. They serve in a collaborative, interconnected role with other campus entities. Having no library would equate to

little, if any, quality student or faculty research, no group meeting or study space, and no access to books or research databases. In short, a tribal college would not function effectively without a library. Tribal libraries also, in addition to serving students, faculty and staff, directly serve their communities in very real and tangible ways.

This role is often directly tied to their missions as most serve not only as academics but also as public libraries in their communities. They are in effect tasked with the dual role of meeting the needs of two distinct groups of patrons with fewer resources than most single-purpose libraries have to draw upon. Many tribal college libraries offer programs for at-risk students such as after-school and summer reading programs and other literacy initiatives, cultural programming for the entire reservation community taught by residents for other residents, especially the children, and many are also instrumental in disseminating health information to their communities.

Tribal college librarians, like the institutions they serve, are also unique in many ways. Most reservation communities are in rural areas and their tribal colleges typically pay their employees less than mainstream colleges and universities. Thus, tribal colleges often struggle to recruit and retain professionals, especially teaching faculty. They struggle to attract skilled professionals who could otherwise earn more and have more opportunities for networking, participating in social and cultural events, and engaging in valuable professional development in more urban areas or at mainstream colleges outside of reservation communities. Because of this dearth of adequately trained professionals who are willing to come to a reservation community, employees are often hired who lack much if any library-related training. All too often individuals that are willing and eager to work at tribal college libraries lack the professional skills and education but are hired to do the job because there are no other options in the labour pool.

Through our experiences with tribal college librarians, we have learned that about half of those serving as tribal college librarians are professionally trained in librarianship. This lack of trained professionals running tribal college libraries is another clear indicator of the need for professional development opportunities for this underserved group of librarians.

8.3 Tribal College Librarians Institute (TCLI)

TCLI was unofficially founded in 1991 when Montana State University Reference Librarian Kathy Kaya responded to a request to create a special workshop to

address the professional needs of librarians at Montana's seven tribal colleges. As a land grant university library, it falls within the outreach scope of the library to provide such training to other librarians in the state.

In 1992, as tribal college librarians in the region got word of this valuable workshop the previous year, even more, tribal college librarians requested another, similar, training workshop. Participation was increased to include North Dakota and South Dakota, and in 1993 to include tribal college librarians from the state of Washington. In 1994, TCLI was formalized into the specialized program that it is today when Kaya received a grant from AIHEC to expand the program yet again to include librarians from all AIHEC-affiliated libraries. Since its first year when seven librarians representing the tribal colleges in Montana attended, TCLI has grown to serve approximately 50 - 60 participants representing over 20-30 institutions annually. In all, TCLI has served nearly 1000 participants from over 50 institutions. While attendees are primarily from the US, librarians serving tribes in Canada also regularly attend and the institute has had participants from as far away as New Zealand. Many participants return year after year, yet each year sees new participants as well.

The same year that TCLI gained AIHEC recognition, 1994, MSU librarian Kay Carey joined Kaya as TCLI Coordinator, and the institute expanded from a couple of days to a week-long event. As TCLI grew, so did inquiries about opening attendance up to a wider audience. After hearing interest and need to be expressed by librarians at non-U.S., non-AIHEC, and non-tribal libraries that serve indigenous college students, the coordinators opened TCLI to all librarians and archivists who have mandates to serve tribal college students. The institute is limited solely to this small group of people because to broaden it would mean diluting the effectiveness of programming and lessening the value of the intimate experience for this targeted audience.

8.3.1 TCLI Professional Development Activities

MSU Library faculty created TCLI to fulfil the professional skills needs of tribal college librarians, and since its inception, the coordinators continually assess, through both formal and informal methods, the needs of the participants to continue to provide relevant programming that includes both knowledge and skills training, as well as cultural programming relevant to those serving Native constituencies. Formal assessments are done through participant surveys at the end of each institute to assess their satisfaction with that year's programming and to learn their desires for programs at future institutes.

In addition to formal requests for feedback, the TCLI coordinators monitor the TCLI email discussion list throughout the year for topics that might become useful for TCLI programs in the upcoming year. TCLI coordinators use the TCLI discussion list to continually solicit suggestions for programs at each institute. While keeping in touch with the unique issues and successes at each of the tribal colleges, the TCLI coordinators also strive to keep abreast of trends in the field of librarianship to expose tribal college librarians to developments or technologies that they may not otherwise come in contact with. As tribal college librarians often have difficulties staying current with trends in the profession or attending professional conferences, this targeted programming during TCLI serves as an important link to the future of librarianship and library services to indigenous constituencies.

TCLI coordinators have witnessed the pursuit and achievement of MLS degrees of several tribal college librarians during our 22-year histories and a key goal is to see TCLI play a role in future pursuits of MLS degrees by TCLI participants. Several regular participants have mentioned interest in pursuing professional degrees and the TCLI coordinators have both individually counselled interested parties, targeted presentations on the topic and helped disseminate information on available MLS programs, especially those that are offered completely online and which would give those working at tribal colleges the ability to continue to work and be with their families while also pursuing a professional degree.

As a result of filling an important niche for this special group of library personnel, TCLI has become the conference of choice for many tribal college librarians from across the United States and beyond. These librarians choose TCLI because it provides an intimate setting where they can come together from geographically isolated and diverse places from across the world to join their peers, and share their challenges and successes while addressing their unique professional development needs through tailored programming. Programming varies year to year but always includes an indigenous cultural element, several face-to-face group problem-solving sessions and both formal and informal gatherings that allow the group to have shared experiences and bond both professionally and personally.

TCLI is currently and has been since its inception, the only professional development organization that serves, and is open solely to, librarians and archivists who directly serve tribal college students. While other organizations exist that serve Native American librarians all are open to anyone who can pay their registration fees and are generally wider in scope than TCLI. While these organizations serve important roles and provide

valuable services to those tribal college librarians their settings, group sizes and programming are more generalized and geared toward a much wider audience. Because tribal college librarians and archivists face challenges and issues that are unique to this small peer group of individuals, an organization such as TCLI is essential for meeting their needs.

TCLI provides directed professional development opportunities aimed specifically at the participants' needs and allows this specialized group of librarians to come together and put a face to their peer institutions, network, pool resources and generally see that they have colleagues and friends who understand the daily challenges they face and can help problem solve based on similar experiences.

8.3.2 Difficulties faced by TCLI in Professional Development

There are a variety of difficulties to overcome in providing professional development opportunities to underserved librarian communities. Underserved often goes hand in hand with underfunded. It stands to reason that if these communities had adequate funding they would likely cease to be underserved as they could provide the training and resources needed themselves. In addition, underserved librarian communities typically serve patrons who are underserved by society in general and often live outside of the norms of mainstream society in terms of access to information. Access can be defined both in terms of having the skill set to access the needed information, such as computer proficiency, and the funds required to provide the tools for access such as home computers or internet services. In essence, underserved librarian communities are often asked to do more with less while providing their services to those who have few if any alternatives to getting their informational needs met.

The main difficulties in providing professional development opportunities to tribal college librarians fall within these two general areas, i.e., making the event affordable to a group of librarians who may have little or no institutional funding available for professional development and making the event relevant for their specific and unique needs.

Funding is the first and arguably largest hurdle to overcome. Funding can be divided into two parts A. the monies needed to bring participants to the institute and B. funding to coordinate, operate and manage the professional development event. Both parts are needed for the institute to work.

Funding for participants is the single greatest factor in making any professional development opportunity for underserved librarians successful and it is also the

main difference between these and most all other professional development opportunities. We offer TCLI at no cost to participants. To define no cost we mean that when possible we fund 100% of actual travel costs, and 100% of housing costs, provide per diems for food and charge no registration fees. Simply put, when we have adequate funding, as long as they are granted professional leave to attend the week-long institute, it is 100% free to participants. We provide TCLI at no cost because by doing so we can make it available to any participant who meets our guidelines and wishes to attend and in this way have the greatest possible impact on tribal college librarians and the patrons they serve.

In years where our budgets have not allowed for complete funding, we have seen fewer participants attend. Low attendance is not because of a lack of interest but due to a lack of means to travel to Bozeman. We have handled limited budgets mainly by rationing the number of funds available for travel to each institution based on the distance to Bozeman. For example, in-state participants would receive actual fuel costs while those in other areas might be offered anywhere from \$250-\$1500 per institution, depending on the mode of travel. We base this primarily on the actual costs of travelling to TCLI. We reason that having one participant from each college allows us to disseminate the information provided as widely as possible through the model of training the trainers. We hope that the skills and resources developed at TCLI will be shared by our participants with their colleagues whom we were unable to fund or who were unable to attend for other reasons.

8.3.3 TCLI Funding Grant and Project

There are no guarantees for successful grant writing and thus running a successful program on grant funds should not be taken lightly. The first step in seeking grant funding is to formulate a project. Drafting a compelling statement of need is easier said than done and needs to be examined fully. Successful grant writers must try to anticipate all possible questions that funding agencies might consider when reading a statement of need and the plea for funding. Consider carefully and comprehensively why your project should be funded over other potential funding requests. Have you demonstrated a clear need? What will be the impact of your project or program if it is funded? Why are you the best entity to address this need?

The project itself needs to be well thought out and planned. Clear results and participant outcomes should be clearly articulated for potential funders. Often identifying the need can be the easy part, but identifying the proposed solution and the specific steps that should be taken to address the need is much more difficult and often based more on theory than tried

and tested results. Only once a need is identified and a carefully formulated plan is articulated in detail should one move on to seeking funding.

The next step is to identify potential funders. The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) should be the first stop for grant seekers looking to fund professional development projects for underserved librarian communities. The website, www.imls.gov, is user-friendly and offers grant seekers the ability to search for grants by institution type, project or grant name. Exploring IMLS grants by the project is likely the easiest way to begin a funding search. Find a grant that works for your proposed project and that is available to the type of institution you are applying from. Most IMLS grants require that the sponsoring institution be a library, museum or federally recognized tribe. The project managers at IMLS are exemplary professionals and can provide information, advice and assistance on both seeking and applying for available grant monies.

Other federal institutions are also options and should be looked at as well. The National Endowment for the Arts, the National Institute of Health, the United States Department of Education and the National Endowment for the Humanities are all potential funders. While individual department and institute websites will contain information on funding available they will provide only information on those institutions' available grants. An alternative to searching several individual sites is to use Grants.gov. Grants.gov is the clearinghouse for all federal grants and is relatively easy to use. The website, created in 2002 under the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999, is a central storehouse for information on thousands of grant programs and provides access to approximately \$500 billion in annual awards. An advantage of using the clearinghouse is that often grant givers that you may not consider, such as the United States Army or Department of Energy can be searched along with better-known federal agencies and departments. Private foundations are also a potential funding option for programs such as TCLI. Searching for private funders can be more difficult as there is no clearinghouse available that encompasses all private funders. There are subscription databases, such as Foundation Directory Online, that collect information on private funders but they are expensive and likely, not affordable for small nonprofits or individuals seeking grants. The best option for using these databases, if your home institution does not subscribe to them, is to check with your local libraries and possibly your institution's alumni or fundraising organization or even a land grant university library in your state. Searching these databases is fairly easy as the limits allow you to narrow your search to very specific parameters.

Grant writing is a significant effort in terms of time and research and should only be

done when your project falls within the funding guidelines of the grant giver. Based on the time it takes to write a single grant application or even a letter of inquiry it is simply not worth the effort to apply for grants that are borderline or outright poor fits in terms of funding professional development projects for underserved librarians. We all may think our project is worthy, that its greatness should be clear to everyone if they would just read our proposal, and that they would surely be convinced that their monies would be well spent with our project. But the fact is many grant funders receive far more worthwhile applications than they can fund and they recognize that many projects could have a positive impact in their interested funding areas.

In essence, when seeking potential funders, be discriminating when you submit a proposal: compete for funding in areas where your ideas may truly take root. If an agency or foundation does not fund travel, then do not request travel funds; if a foundation only funds in Nebraska, do not apply for a project based in Alaska. TCLI has received generous funding because we have been able to establish a successful niche professional development experience, an annual program unlike any other that participants continue attending year after year.

There are several other considerations when working on your grant application. First, keep in mind that your audience may not have a background or intimate knowledge of librarianship. So keep your verbiage simple and your field-specific language to a minimum. Explain issues and challenges as you would to someone out of the field. A good tip is to write the first draft of the grant narrative and then have someone outside of the field of librarianship with little or no knowledge of your field or your project read it; if they do not clearly understand what the project is proposing they can help you with editing suggestions. Also, remember to follow the finer details in a grant application precisely. If a funding agency asks for a two-page proposal then only submit a two-page proposal. If they request 12-point font and double spacing then follow those guidelines.

Remember that they will have more qualified applications than they can fund and those that could not follow the basic grant guidelines may not even be considered. From the funder's perspective, a proposal that doesn't follow stated guidelines may not be worthy of funding because a poorly written grant proposal may leave doubt about abilities to complete requirements for reporting and completion of the grant project. In-kind monies or services are also important to consider before submitting a grant application. Some type of in-kind support is typically required for most federal grants. The more your home institution is willing to donate in terms of personnel time, resources or funding, the stronger it makes your application.

Time and resources are typically easier to secure than internal monies. Consider the value of all services provided as in-kind support. Computer use, software applications, office supplies, space for meetings and all staff time doing even menial tasks like creating nametags or emailing participants should be calculated in actual monetary value and listed as in-kind support.

Expertise and training by any parties working for or coordinating the proposed project should be made clear to potential funders. Humility has its place but when applying for grants all those involved are selling themselves and their skills to a donor. Parties should list the degrees, relevant experience, commitment to cause, training and technical skills of all those involved in the project. Every piece of information provided on the personnel involved in the project is one less area the donor is forced to guess or assume the people using the monies provided have the competencies needed to tackle the tasks required to complete the project.

Even after a grant has been submitted and successfully funded, there is still work to do. Most grant givers will expect regular updates on the project and a detailed report upon the conclusion of the project showing how it met the proposed goals and outcomes. This is a vital step both for meeting the original requirement of the grant and also for developing relationships and track records for future funding. Once you receive a grant, proper reporting and responsible use of the funds are vital to future funding. Use the monies as if they were your own and get the most value possible for your dollar. If you wrote in funds for lunch or dinner consider pizza or sandwiches over catering, which would be much more expensive. The more fiscally responsible you are the better the grantor will feel about the use of their monies and the more likely they are to provide future funding.

Making the TCLI experience relevant for participants is the single greatest factor relating to both the short and long-term success of the project. Content is based primarily on participant requests and stated needs. Each year participants are asked to fill out an evaluation form that also asks what type of programming they would like to see at the next institute. In addition to participant feedback and requests each year, the TCLI coordinators also strive to include a culturally-based program and invite speakers who are nationally recognized as experts and innovators in various areas of librarianship.

The impact of TCLI on tribal libraries and librarians has been significant. The informal and anecdotal feedback received through personal conversations and the annual evaluations has consistently supported the relevance and overall impact of TCLI programming on tribal college librarians and tribal libraries. In addition, the coordinators have occasionally sought out, often in direct relation to grant applications, direct examples from participants of where TCLI programming has impacted their professional development and/or libraries. Some examples of participant responses to their TCLI experience about direct benefits to them and their library work include the following:

- “Always return home with usable ideas; the listserv is very important.”

- “Networking with other participants.”
- “This is an excellent gathering. It’s perfect.”
- “It’s great! Love the institute! Great people! Great ideas!”
- “The information and ideas that help me find funding based on what others are doing.”
- “Face-face interaction is very important.
- “Having presentations with links is important as well to go to the next step.”
- “Thoughtful learning experiences, refreshers, and detailed look at specific resources.”
- “Challenged to go back and implement ideas.”
- “The topics are always timely.”
- “New ideas for interdepartmental collaborations, more ideas for dealing with problematic issues, many more free resources to share with instructors and students.”
- “A chance to step back from every day and look at other issues.”
- “First time (attending), but I think programming at my library will improve.”
- “Renewed energy for my work.”
- “Assessing; that it’s important to have someone doing it.”

8.4 Future Research Directions

In the future, there will still be a need to provide professional development opportunities to underserved librarian communities such as tribal college librarians. In-person conferences will likely continue to be the norm at least in the short term for this group of professionals. Personal connections, experiences and the bonds they create are best developed through face-to-face meetings and group events. That being said, there will continue to be growth and movement towards electronic web-based professional development events.

The types will vary and consist of everything from real-time web conferencing to asynchronous webcasts. All will offer benefits and have their limitations. Webinars offer real-time interaction but the interaction is mainly limited to that between the individual participants with the speaker. Webcasts offer viewers the opportunity to view and review the material at will but have limited opportunities for follow-up questions or interactions.

Virtual conferences using Skype or other real-time video software will offer the users the experience that is most like a face-to-face conference by allowing participants to interact with both the speakers and each other. The prime benefits of

offering these types of virtual professional development opportunities are that they are less expensive and may require less coordination and commitments of time and resources. However, none of these virtual options is a real substitute for a face-to-face group meeting. Individual networking, the act of experiencing new events and having dedicated time away from the workplace are all opportunities that cannot be underestimated in terms of value, actual learning and long-lasting impact on participants when they convene with their peers.

8.5 Conclusion

The necessity of providing professional development opportunities to underserved librarian communities such as village/tribal college librarians is clear. These librarians typically serve patrons who have the greatest need for library services and who stand to benefit the most from what librarians and libraries can offer them.

Tribal college librarians, as professionals in any other field, need ongoing continuing education to remain useful and valuable to those they serve, including their campus constituencies and community members. TCLI will continue to build upon its 20+ years of success by seeking to provide relevant professional development opportunities for tribal college librarians and librarians who directly serve tribal college students.

The current coordinators/administration hope to identify funders willing to help establish a foundation fund for the institute so that funding can be assured into the future and be less susceptible to downturns in the economy or the willingness of grant givers to fund professional development for underserved librarian communities.

Self-assessment Questions

1. Briefly explain the future directions of professional development of underserved librarians.
2. Describe the essential elements of a successful grant document.
3. Explain difficulties faced by TCLI in the professional development of tribal college librarians.

Activity:

1. With the help of a tutor write an award-winning project to attend an international workshop/seminar/conference.

Recommended Reading:

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Unit No. 9

**LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS CONFERENCES
AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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INTRODUCTION

The unit is specifically designed for students and librarians who are interested in professional development. This will especially focus on the role of library associations in the professional development of library professionals. It will also explore funding opportunities for attending local and international conferences.

OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you will be able to explain the following:

1. Role of library associations in the professional development of professionals.
2. How can librarians get professional benefits through attending conferences?

A professional association is an important trait of the profe

9.1 Introduction

The role of the library association in the library profession has been examined with some regularity. *Library Trends* devoted a special issue to the subject in 1997. The introduction to that issue offers a good overview of what is meant by library association: a volunteer organization, drawing from a pool of experienced professionals, with collective funds to address issues of importance and interest, and an interest in standards for members of the profession, including professional development. The special issue goes on to address how library associations lead to the “establishment of a unified culture for the profession, the institutionalization of professional codes of conduct, the establishment of educational and performance standards, and the diffusion and incorporation of change and innovation within the profession”. Some associations have been more overt about the establishment of culture in librarianship. For example, the American Library Association takes an active role in accrediting library schools in the United States and Canada. Other actions can be a bit more subtle—awards recognizing professionals, selection of keynote and other conference speakers, committee charges, and so on can all speak to what is valued and supported in the profession by a particular association.

The goals of library associations almost universally include the continuing education of members, which is demonstrated in the offering of conferences, among other learning opportunities. In a survey of state library associations, respondents indicated heavy reliance on the conference as a mode of professional development. These conferences and other opportunities allow members to get involved in the association and contribute to the learning process. Members contribute by participating in learning activities as learners but also by teaching, presenting, organizing, and recommending these activities.

Another key benefit of associations for librarians is the provision of mentoring opportunities. The association serves to gather a pool of professionals together from all levels of experience. It is easy for an enterprising individual to make mentoring contacts in such an environment, and also easy for the association to work to connect members in mentoring relationships at a variety of levels as an explicated bonus of membership. Members decide to join and continue in associations largely for reasons of professional development. Conference attendance as a professional development outlet was specifically mentioned by several association-agnostic people as their reason for joining an association, in a survey conducted for an article in the special issue of *Library Trends* by Kamm, 1997. This has been a popular rationale for library associations to offer a discounted conference registration price

to association members, as the special pricing encourages conference attendees to sign up for a membership and also to maintain a membership to receive a discount.

The association members attracted by this deal may not participate any more fully in the association than by attending the conference, which is what is meant by association-agnostic. The ability to attend conferences generally, and to receive conference programming specifically, for their specific situation was cited frequently by library paraprofessionals in discussing library association needs. Paraprofessionals face additional barriers in attending conferences, as time off may be more difficult to arrange and they often have no access to a library's professional development funds. However, paraprofessionals often have a need or desire for the type of training that can be received at conferences. In addition, the conference environment offers opportunities for networking and training that can benefit library paraprofessionals as much as professionals. Similar needs have been explored regarding ethnic groups in librarianship. Inclusiveness at library conferences has not always been a given, and diversity is often a professional goal put forward by library associations.

Our profession appreciates conference sessions focusing on the needs of particular ethnic and racial groups in librarianship generally and by these groups (and those who serve them) in particular. Some library workers with these more narrow professional focuses, i.e., paraprofessionals, ethnic groups, and school librarians, have been critical in the literature of associations' conference offerings for their particular. The critiques usually say there is not enough special interest programming at conferences, that the available programming is not targeted appropriately in real-world situations, or that the appropriate group for the programming is not well represented at conferences.

Conference attendance is a necessity for all professionals and librarians are no exception. For librarians working in academic libraries, conference attendance is often a requirement of the job and is needed to advance one's career. Given that librarians need to attend conferences anyway, international library conferences should be a consideration for all but especially for librarians new to the field and those working in academic libraries. For those new to the field of librarianship, an international conference can help them determine the direction of their careers and the overall impact they want to make. The exposure to the world of librarianship at the beginning of one's career will inspire a librarian to think about the possibilities of their own life, the people that they can serve and the difference that they can make both locally and globally.

9.2 Conferences benefits professionals

One of the most recent and thorough examinations of what librarians want out of their conference experience was written by Vega and Connell (2007). They found that most of the library workers they surveyed attended at least one conference a year and that they primarily attended conferences for reasons of rejuvenation and networking. The exhibit hall and conversations with vendors were also major attractions. The major detractions they found for conference attendances were the cost and travel. Involvement in service opportunities like committees was not of much importance.

For academic librarians, exposure to colleagues the world over can serve to invigorate and provide perspective on their services, libraries and resources. In addition, participation in international conferences reflects well on the librarian's home university and their resume. The exposure, learning and networking that can occur can be life-changing and help put our career choice into perspective in terms of its value not only to the patrons we serve directly but to patrons the world over.

Once an individual has determined that they want to enter the international world of librarianship by attending a conference in a location outside of their home country the next big decision to make is whether to simply attend or also add value to the conference itself by presenting. Attendance is great and offers significant benefits to the librarian but presenting helps the librarian impact and educate his or her colleagues in attendance. In addition, it is a great way to build one's vita and enhance your career and the way you are viewed by colleagues.

Presenting at an international conference may sound daunting but in reality, it is no more work or investment of time than preparing a presentation for a national or regional conference would be. The international language of business and science is English and the vast majority of international conferences, regardless of discipline, are conducted in English. Papers are usually required to be written and presented in English and participants typically have at a minimum the ability to hold a conversation or ask questions in the official language of the conference.

In addition to library-related conferences, one should consider as an alternative or first choice an international conference outside of librarianship. By doing so, an individual librarian can make great strides in bridging the gap between faculty and students knowing about what libraries and librarians can offer them, to the significantly greater number of resources and services that we do provide. For academic librarians who serve as liaisons to departments outside the library and

specialist librarians who serve large groups of specific discipline-related professionals, attending a conference in a related field of study can have a positive impact on the level of service one can provide. A librarian can leave the conference with knowledge of new resources; visions of trends in the field; contacts for support and sharing of information; and an interesting way to begin a conversation with a new student or faculty member.

Presenting at a non-library-related conference on issues related to librarianship and especially on services or resources available to researchers is a direct way librarians can help ensure their continued existence and relevance. If librarians truly believe what I have often heard them say (and, in full disclosure, have said myself countless times) “if our patrons knew more about our services we would be even more utilized,” then dissemination of information on what we do and who we are is central to increasing use. Presenting at a discipline-specific conference, anywhere it is held, is a prime way we have of reaching key patron groups. Consider the sheer number of faculty that could be reached, and act as direct conduits to their students, if every professional conference included a session or two on the role of library services and resources in their professional lives.

9.3 Role of Library Associations in Promoting Research

International library associations’ measures for supporting research have been examples of professionals’ development. It is believed that having studied these examples from countries with developed education and librarianship systems would prove useful in suggesting Pakistan Library Associations.

9.3.1 International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA).

IFLA is an organization committed to many various areas of professional interest. IFLA’s Guidelines for Professional Library/Information Educational Programs (IFLA 2000) include ten core elements, the sixth of which is “Research, Analysis and Interpretation of Information”. It is designed to apply more widely to research into and about the profession. IFLA has established a Section on Library Theory and Research (LTR). Nevertheless, LTR is Section 24 of 47 IFLA sections, which is specialized in Education and Training. It shows immense interest and commitment by this organisation to the improvement of research activities (IFLA, 2000).

9.3.2 The American Library Association (ALA).

The American Library Association (ALA) is very committed to the education of the profession and has extensive accreditation procedures. Its accreditation processes, policies and procedures (ALA, 2003) pay attention to the research activity of faculty, and the availability of research funds. ALA Accreditation standards 1992 continues to acknowledge “the importance of research to the advancement of the field’s knowledge base” throughout the document. The first professional qualification in librarianship in the US is at the Master's level, so perhaps this is why such emphasis on research is present. Canadian library schools are also accredited by ALA and follow a similar educational pattern to that in the US.

9.3.3 Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP: UK).

The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) in the United Kingdom adopted a research policy and strategy by undertaking many activities including to:

- act as an authoritative voice on R&D
- influence the broad R&D agenda
- identify and promote appropriate R&D
- maintain dialogue with relevant stakeholders
- disseminate information about R&D activity
- promote the take-up of relevant R&D outcomes
- ensure an adequate skills base for undertaking and applying R&D, and
- nurture a professional culture that embraces R&D and encourages reflective practice generally.

9.3.4 The European Association for Library and Information Research (EUCLID)

The European Association for Library and Information Research (EUCLID) states its mission as; The Association is an independent European non-governmental and non-profit organization whose purposes are: to promote cooperation within library and information education and research and to provide a body through which it can be represented in matters of European interest. The execution of this cooperative intention can be seen in the conferences and meetings the group organizes.

EUCLID has been continuously taking steps to concentrate on library education issues and makes little if any mention of the role of research in this process.

9.3.5 Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa (LIANZA).

LIANZA is the professional LIS association in New Zealand. Its website states that: LIANZA directly contributes to and participates in the development of the Library and Information profession. It is involved with:

- education of new librarians
- recognition of excellence and innovation
- scholarships and grants
- promotion of job opportunities within the profession.

9.3.6 The American Society for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T).

Another US LIS association with a strong research emphasis is the American Society for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T). Formed in 1937, ASIS& T has been the society for information professionals leading the search for new and better theories, techniques, and technologies to improve access to information. ASIS&T brings together diverse streams of knowledge, focusing on what might be disparate approaches into novel solutions to common problems. ASIS&T bridges the gaps not only between disciplines but also between the research that drives and the practices that sustain new developments.

9.4 Research Directions

It would be of interest to perform a more thorough study of how associations plan, fund, and evaluate conferences for their members. Data exists in the form of conference budgets, attendance figures, member satisfaction surveys, counts of attendees returning each year, counts of new attendees, and so on. It would be a big task to gather the data for several associations for evaluation, but the trends that could be captured might prove invaluable for associations trying to maximize the efficacy of their conference planning, as well as for exhibitors looking to spend their display dollars as wisely as possible.

Along with the attendance and funding data, it would be of special interest for me to see if location makes a difference for conferences, and if so, what kind of difference. Many

associations have trouble finding cities large enough to host a conference for their full membership. Is this truly a problem when it comes to attracting a good mix of attendees from a geographic region, or a topical area of librarianship? Would several smaller satellite conferences maybe work better than one large conference?

As the number of paraprofessionals in the library field grows, it would be worthwhile to examine what this particular group needs and wants from professional development opportunities like conferences. Are their needs different from librarians? Do our conferences and other outlets provide more for the librarian mindset and not enough for the paraprofessional? Another group worth examining would be library student attendees of conferences. Many associations offer special rates to students who attend their conferences, scholarships to attend, or volunteer programs to lower registration rates. Some also offer special programming and events for library students. What draws in student attendees to a conference? Does student attendance at a conference translate into association activity, connection with the profession, and/or other positive attributes?

The issue of vendors and what can be done to improve their participation and interactions is a big one. Traditionally vendors have provided the bulk of funding for conferences. The perception is that vendors are less interested in exhibiting at conferences in recent years, although this perception does not seem to be backed up by data. What does the data tell us? Do we need to think about different ways to involve this constituency, and increase their interactions with association members? And how would exhibit halls play out in an online conference?

Moving away from conferences, it would be interesting to examine how associations use outlets besides conferences for professional development. A large majority of associations surveyed use listservs or other online media for professional development purposes. What do they do with these outlets? What works well to connect with members and provide them with a useful experience? Could some best practices be developed? With the continuing evolution of the internet, what role will these online venues begin to play in professional development? Will they replicate or even replace the face-to-face conference at any point shortly? What are the best practices for online conferences at this point? Do online conferences linked with face-to-face events (i.e., ALA's Virtual Conference) offer the best of all worlds? A further benefit of online conferences, which could be explored in research, is the ability to archive sessions and events for later viewing. How useful is this feature to those who cannot attend an event in real-time? How beneficial is it for those who were able to attend a face-to-face event to have access to a recording of the session afterwards? How often are these features used? Could they be used more or better?

9.5 Conclusion

The library conference is still clearly a valuable and valued mode of professional development for associations and library workers. Face-to-face professional conferences seem to be in no danger of dying out as a form of association-provided professional development, despite cost and travel concerns. Conferences can still be financially beneficial for associations and provide important opportunities for members to interact with one another and become involved in association activities.

Virtual options are becoming more prevalent and accepted, and a wise association would begin to take the technology available for virtual offerings into serious consideration. As *Race for Relevance* by Coerver & Byers, 2011 pointed out, associations need to focus on the things they do well but take technology into account. Library Associations can arguably be said to do library conferences for purposes of professional development well, but how could the adoption and use of technology and virtual meeting services make a good thing even better? Stated benefits of online conferences include the ability to attend from anywhere and avoid time away and hassle, and further benefits include the archival capabilities of virtual conference software. The downsides of lessened networking can be dealt with creatively, as the Amigos Library Conference did with their snack box, and the technology offered for online communication might improve to the point where networking no longer is a barrier in this modality.

Many questions remain as to what makes a conference the most profitable and useful experience for both members and associations alike. The wisest course of action at this point for library associations providing this learning environment (which is the vast majority of associations) seems to be to offer a virtual conference linked with face-to-face offerings, to capture the best of all aspects of conference-based professional development. For a little additional cost and trouble, associations can provide archival access to real-world conference sessions for attendees as well as offer these resources to a global audience.

Self-assessment Questions

1. Describe the role of library associations in the professional development of librarians.
2. Explain how library associations can benefit their members and non-members by arranging conferences.
3. How do associations fund and sanctions grant for professionals for their professional development?

Activity:

1. Visit the website of ALA and prepare the conference activities chart organized and conducted by her in the last three years.

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