

I just got hired, now what?
Transitioning from classroom to workplace

Session # 329

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School-Work Differences:

- service delivery: writing vs. doing
- mission, goals, alignment
- performance appraisal
- hierarchy and structure
- social complexity, relationship management, EI – emotional intelligence
- tacit knowledge, tacit learning
- verbal communication
- supervisory relationship
- collaboration, teamwork, project management
- workflow, cycle
- multiple roles
- decision-making
- supervision, delegation
- personal initiative, engagement
- lifelong learning
- organizational lexicon

What new grads should know about (courtesy Jo Bryant, City Librarian, Toronto Public Library):

- Fairness, equity
- Competencies – expectations (objectives), performance standards, evaluation measures
- Collective agreement
- Culture – values, relationships, traditions, conventions
- Best practices
- Business case – objectives, costs, milestones, outcomes, measurables
- Strategic planning
- Outcomes assessment
- Civic engagement
- Public policy
- Self-actualization

Top five workplace priorities:

- cross-functional implications and complexities of decision-making
- collegial, respectful teamwork
- care in considering the impact of a change – history and context of decisions
- vision, strategic planning priorities, values – reflected in decision-making
- board-driven cycle

Lessons from an internship:

(Richard Bloom, *Globe & Mail*, 15/09/06, page C1)

- never stop networking
- start small
- attend conferences
- check in regularly
- attend meetings
- real-world experience counts

Employment relationships in a good job:

(Graham Lowe, *The Quality of Work: A People-Centred Agenda*, 2000)

- trust
- commitment
- communication
- influence

Factors in considering a job opportunity:

(E Beauchesne, *Edmonton Journal*, 2/09/05, page E2)

- learning and growth opportunities (33%)
- personal satisfaction (25%)
- balance in work and personal life (20%)
- salary (10%)

Job criteria in interview guide:

- Organizational and planning skills
- Analytical ability, self-assessment, creativity, decisiveness, motivation, interest in self-development
- Tolerance for stress, flexibility, stability and maturity
- Oral communication skills, oral presentation skills, written
- Teamwork
- Customer service orientation
- Leadership

Sample personnel evaluation form:

- Job knowledge
- Quality of work
- Quantity of work
- Working relationships
- Dependability
- Oral and writing skills
- Organization/planning
- Initiative
- Leadership

Personal Competencies

Personal Competencies represent a set of attitudes, skills and values that enable practitioners to work effectively and contribute positively to their organizations, clients and profession. These competencies range from being strong communicators, to demonstrating the value-add of their contributions, to remaining flexible and positive in an ever-changing environment. (p. 2)

Personal Competencies

Every information professional:

- Seeks out challenges and capitalizes on new opportunities
- Sees the big picture
- Communicates effectively
- Presents ideas clearly; negotiates confidently and persuasively
- Creates partnerships and alliances
- Builds an environment of mutual respect and trust; respects and values diversity
- Employs a team approach; recognizes the balance of collaborating, leading and following
- Takes calculated risks; shows courage and tenacity when faced with opposition
- Plans, prioritises and focuses on what is critical
- Demonstrates personal career planning
- Thinks creatively and innovatively; seeks new or 'reinventing' opportunities
- Recognizes the value of professional networking and personal career planning
- Balances work, family and community obligations
- Remains flexible and positive in a time of continuing change
- Celebrates achievements for self and others (pp. 8-9)

Source: <http://www.sla.org/content/learn/comp2003/index.cfm>

"COMPETENCIES FOR INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS"

"Competencies for Information Professionals of the 21st Century"
Revised edition, June 2003

Prepared for the Special Libraries Association Board of Directors by the Special Committee on Competencies for Special Librarians (Eileen Abels, Rebecca Jones, John Latham, Dee Magnoni, Joanne Gard Marshall)

Students see the Practicum as an important, positive step in helping them to explore their career potential and gain professional experience and socialization. Supervisors also express satisfaction in interacting with students over the extended period of time afforded by the Practicum. While not all placements prove to be uniformly outstanding (about one per year is less than positive for either or both parties), this document tries to identify basic approaches and practices for successful Practicum experience as suggested by recent contributors, both supervisors and students, in a half-day consultation and through individual submissions.

The Best Practices and other course documentation are available at http://www.ualberta.ca/~aschrade/lis590/590_outline.htm.

Key Purposes

- for the student to absorb insights into and tacit knowledge of the inner workings, culture, vision, and values of the organization including relevant professional socialization
- for the student to gain an understanding of how communication, planning, and decision-making occur in the organization both at a local level and at a system-wide level if applicable
- for the student to gain practical experience in applying classroom learning to workplace tasks and projects as mutually negotiated

Key Organizational Practices

- the School's documentation about the course
- the School's care in matching the student with the institution and supervisor
- pre-placement exploratory meeting between the student and the supervisor to clearly articulate interests and expectations on the part of both parties, and before final agreement to proceed is made
- detailed planning and preparation for the student's arrival
- work plan and regular schedule for the student, in consultation and mutual agreement between the supervisor and the student
- in-depth orientation and training
- supportive supervision with adequate time for ongoing communication and mentoring with the student, for touching base regularly on projects, experiences, and expectations, and for feeling valued in the workplace
- shared supervision, interaction, informal learning, and networking with as many staff as possible
- arranging for the student to observe at staff meetings, team meetings, discussion groups, and other planning processes, and to contribute as appropriate
- in general, viewing the student as an integral part of the organizational team

Projects

- professional level, clearly defined, meaningful, manageable
- recognizing limited time is available after socialization and other regular activities

Measuring Success — very qualitatively

- how well the student integrates into the organization
- how well the student interacts with all staff
- student confidence level growth and transformation.