

Assessing the Future: Developing Information Technology Skills for New Staff Roles in Academic Medical Libraries

Author Affiliations: Carol Perryman, IMLS/TRLN Research Fellow; Robert James, Associate Director, Access Services; Charlie Lackey, Assistant Director, Cataloging and Bibliographic Services; Rick Peterson, Deputy Director, Duke University Medical Center Library, Durham, NC 27710

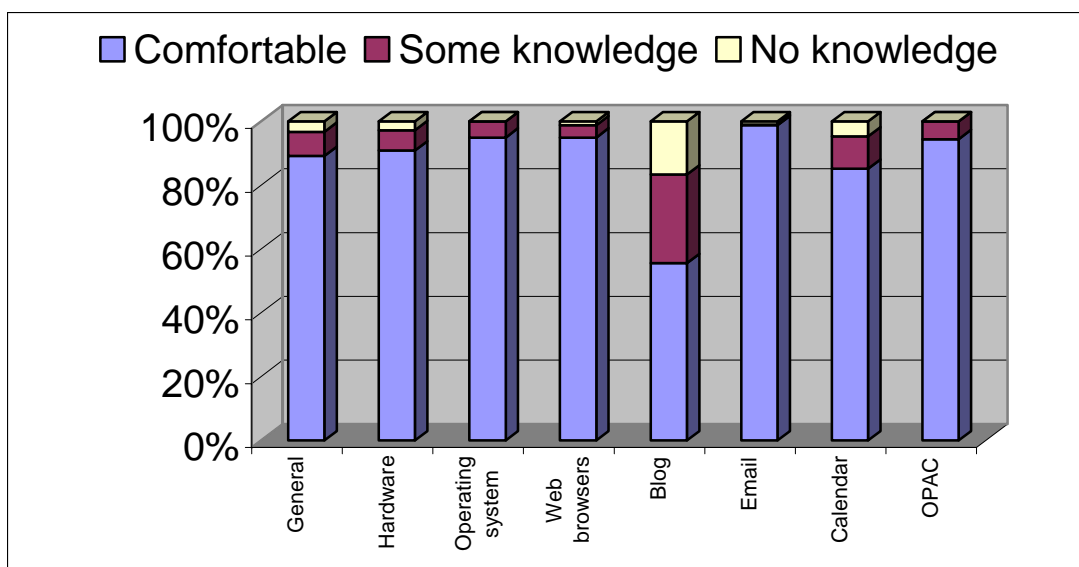
Purpose: The primary objective of this study is to assess the information technology (IT) competencies of staff at the Medical Center Library in order to plan for expanded roles in the future.

Setting/Subjects: The Medical Center Library serves as the primary information resource for Duke University's Medical Center and Health System. With 40 FTE staff and a rapidly shifting demand from the School of Medicine for collaborative and educational spaces and services, the Medical Center Library is poised for transition to a Learning Resource Center.

Methodology: First, a literature review was performed in order to determine whether other libraries had performed a similar inventory. Technology activities derived from a review of all job descriptions were conceptually grouped to build a core set of competencies and an expanded, comprehensive listing for use as a survey. After pilot testing with one department, the survey was then refined and administered to all staff. Finally, the results were assessed and used to support training programs intended to address deficits between present and future needs.

Results: The IT assessment and survey instruments work well to quantify present-day IT skills and skill deficits. Results of the survey aid in planning for future training, and enable more accurate position descriptions.

Discussion/conclusion: An awareness of staff IT knowledge and practice is crucial to planning for the future of this and other medical libraries. In addition to addressing position description discrepancies, focused IT training supports the career development needs of all staff. Ultimately, we feel that having a more accurate idea of staff IT skills will serve to strengthen the ability of library staff to collaborate with Medical Center and Health System stakeholders in building and providing support for the new Learning Resource Center.



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Carol Perryman, TRLN Fellow; Robert James, Associate Director of Access Services; Charlie Lackey, Assistant Director of Cataloging and Bibliographic Services;
Rick Peterson, Deputy Director, Duke University Medical Center Library, Durham, NC

Purpose: Assess the technology skills of the Medical Center Library staff to plan for expanded roles in the future

Setting & Subjects

- The Medical Center Library serves as the primary information resource for Duke Medicine
- 40 FTE staff members
- Increasing demand for collaborative and educational spaces and services
- Poised for transition to a Learning Resources Center

Feedback

“Don’t know where all the manuals are located.”

“I need to learn how to put things in files and create them.”

“I know nothing of the blog discussion.”

“I know the theory but could use practice / hands-on training.”

“I’m never quite sure what password is being requested.”

“No knowledge of virus check.”

Methodology

- 1 Review job descriptions
Conduct literature review
Develop list of technical skills
- 2 Develop survey instrument
- 3 Conduct pilot survey
Revise survey as needed
Survey remainder of the staff
- 4 Analyze results
Identify need for additional skills
Develop training program

Results

- Developed list of technology skills
- Designed survey instrument
- Gained understanding of staff’s current technology skills
- Planned for future training needs

Future Plans

- Additional skill development for new roles and career advancement
- Update position descriptions and conduct reclassification review
- Strengthen the ability of staff to partner with the School of Medicine
- Prepare for the integration of new services into the Medical Center Library

