



Competencies for Special Librarians of the 21st Century

Competencies are defined as the interplay of knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes required to do a job effectively from the point of view of the performer and the observer. These include both professional and personal competencies. This set of knowledge and skills unique to special librarians allows us to function in a variety of environments to produce a continuum of value-added, customized information services that cannot be easily duplicated by others.

Each annual conference continuing education course is labeled with the competency number that is best addressed by that specific program. Please refer to the chart below to determine which competencies the course you are interested in addresses.

Personal Competencies

Professional Competencies

The Special Librarian

1.1 has expert knowledge of the content of information resources, including the ability to critically evaluate and filter them.

2.1 is committed to service excellence.

1.2 has specialized subject knowledge appropriate to the business of the organization or client.

2.2 seeks out challenges and sees new opportunities both inside and outside the library.

1.3 develops and manages convenient, accessible, and cost-effective information services that are aligned with the strategic directions of the organization.

2.3 sees the big picture.

1.4 provides excellent instruction and support for library and information service users.

2.4 looks for partnerships and alliances.

1.5 assesses information needs and designs and markets value-added information services and products to meet identified needs.

2.5 creates an environment of mutual respect and trust.

1.6 uses appropriate information technology to acquire, organize, and disseminate information.

2.6 has effective communication skills.

1.7 uses appropriate business and management approaches to communicate the importance of information services to senior management.

1.8 develops specialized information products for use inside or outside the organization or by individual clients.

1.9 evaluates the outcomes of information use and conducts research related to the solution of information management problems.

1.10 continually improves information services in response to changing needs.

1.11 is an effective member of the senior management team and a consultant to the organization on information issues.

2.7 works well with others in a team.

2.8 provides leadership.

2.9 plans, prioritizes, and focuses on what is critical.

2.10 is committed to lifelong learning and personal career planning.

2.11 has personal business skills and creates new opportunities.

2.12 recognizes the value of professional networking and solidarity.

2.13 is flexible and positive in a time of continuing change.

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What is a Special Librarian



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