

The Future of Human
Resources in Canadian
Libraries



People: Competencies for the Big Picture

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Information and Innovation



Objective

- Comprehensive investigation of issues around recruitment, retention, remuneration, repatriation, rejuvenation, reaccreditation, retirement, and restructuring (the 8Rs) in the Canadian library context

The 8Rs

- Recruitment
- Retention
- Remuneration
- Repatriation
- Reaccreditation
- Rejuvenation
- Retirement
- Restructuring

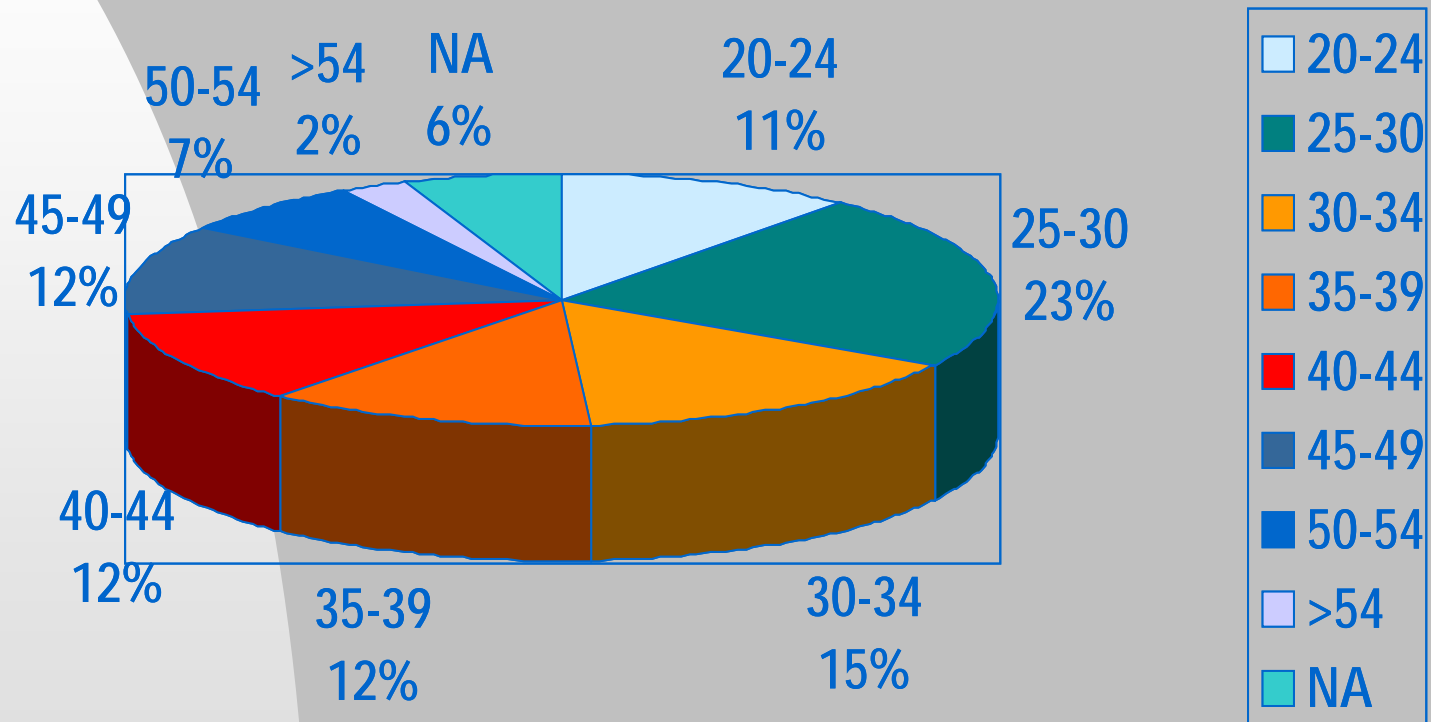
8Rs Project Scope

- 3-year study of unprecedented breadth and depth
- 167 data tables
- Over 400 variables
- 275-page report
- Analyses of data by library sectors and sub-sectors

Fundamental Question

- Will there be a shortage of librarians in the next 5 to 10 years?
- Although a simple question, no discrete answers
- In the process we learned:
 - ◆ No clear demographic crisis
 - ◆ Crises in other areas of competencies and qualities of recruits and staff

Ages of Students Enrolled in Canada and U.S. MLIS Programs



*based on total of 13,127 enrolled. Note: Pratt, Western Ontario and Toronto data not available. Source: ALISE Library and Information Science

Methods

- Institutional Survey
 - 1,357 surveys sent to libraries
 - 34% response rate overall (461 completions)
 - 36% public libraries
 - 50% academic libraries
 - 26% special libraries
- Individual Survey
 - ◆ Web survey sent to 8,626 library workers; response rate of 36.5%
 - ◆ Additional 1,545 responses collected through listserv

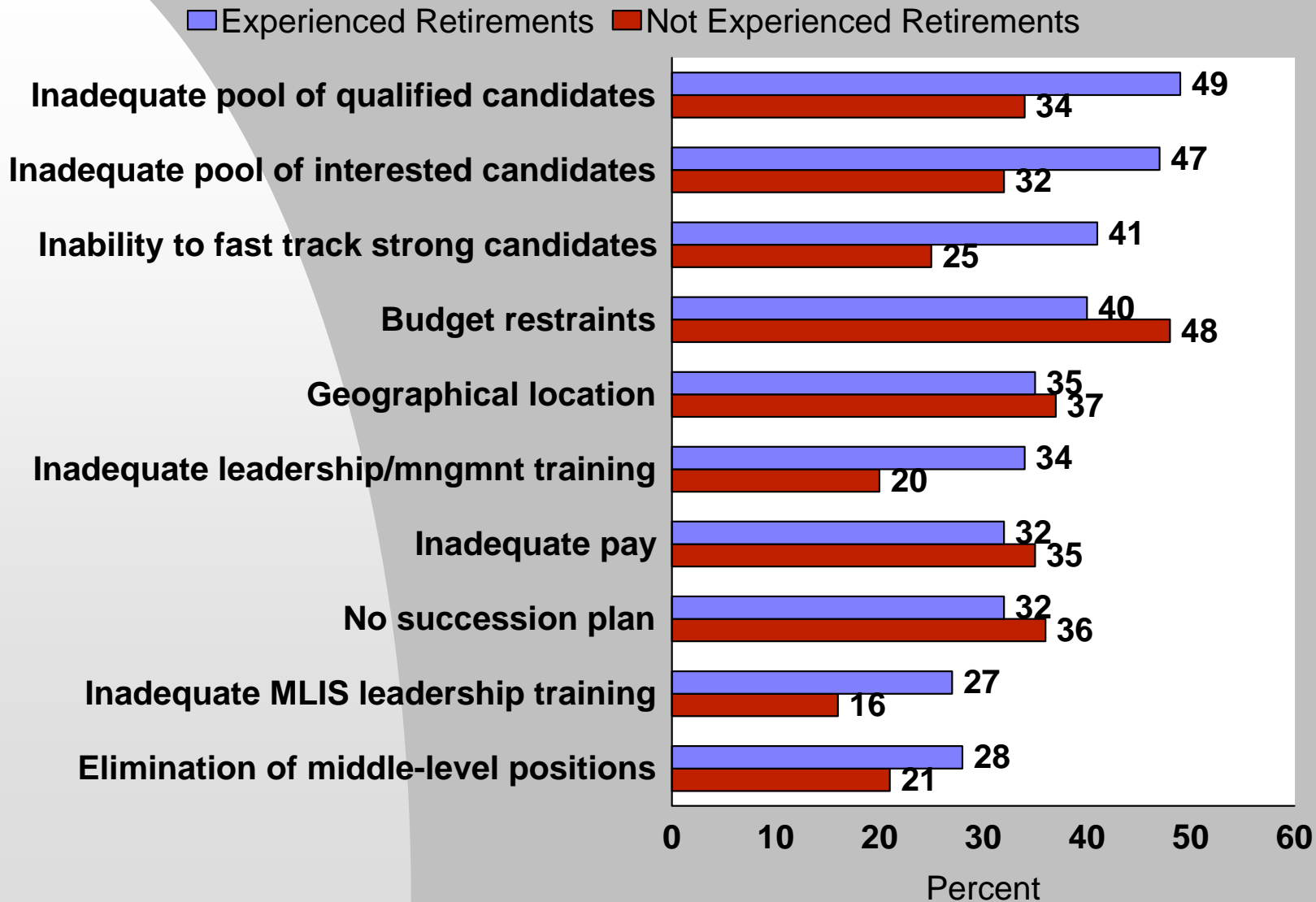
Most Important and Difficult Competencies to Fulfill When Recruiting

- 42%: Leadership potential
- 40%: Managerial skills
- 39%: Ability to respond flexibly to change
- 32%: Innovativeness
- 32%: Ability to handle high-volume workload

Implications

- Leadership and management: reappearing, core competencies in high demand by libraries
- The ability to respond flexibly to change logically follows, since libraries are dynamic workplaces
 - ◆ Bodes well for a new generation of the “digital natives” who are inherent multi-taskers
- We must seek candidates with these competencies when recruiting to institutions and to the profession
- 94% of libraries state over the next 5 years, there will be an increased demand for librarians to perform a wider variety of tasks
- 88% say the need will increase for librarians to be ‘specialists’ or possess a depth of knowledge at the same time

Most Important Barriers to Replacing Competencies Lost by Departing Senior Librarians for Libraries Experiencing and Not Experiencing Retirements



Implications

- Barriers for libraries that have had recent retirements:
 - ◆ 49% say an inadequate pool of qualified candidates
 - ◆ 47% say inadequate numbers of interested candidates
- These barriers exhibited within an environment of relatively low recruitment need/activity
- Libraries experienced greater difficulties in replacing leadership qualities lost than technical skills/knowledge
- 46% of libraries state their current pool of internal candidates was inadequate to replace leadership qualities

Table G.7: Percent of Recent Librarian Entrants Agreeing that MLIS Program Provided Skills to Effectively Perform their Jobs by Library Sector

“My Program Provided Me With . . . “

Library Sector	General Skills/Abilities	Problem-solving skills	IT Skills	Mgmt Skills	Ldrship Skills	Bus. Skills
TOTAL	63	45	46	25	20	12
TOTAL ACADEMIC	55	42	45	23	16	7
TOTAL PUBLIC	68	46	52	27	23	16
TOTAL SPECIAL	66	52	44	29	24	12

Implications

- Environmental factors: how to deal with limited budgets, etc.
- Need to attract the best and brightest to the profession and to individual libraries
- Need to ensure strong candidates get leadership and management development
- Much of the training and development responsibility will lie with libraries themselves
- How will libraries predict what competencies are needed as time goes on?
- Will the knowledge economy mean greater competition for highly-skilled library staff?
 - ◆ Large research libraries will be the winners
 - ◆ Small or rural libraries may find recruitment & retention issues compounding over time

**Table K.3: Indicators of Demand for Management and Leadership Skills by Library Sector
(Institutional Survey; n=274)**

Percent of Libraries Reporting Increased Need for Librarians to . . .

Library Sector	Perform More Managerial Functions		Assume More of a Leadership Role	
	In Past 5 Years	Over Next 5 Years	In Past 5 Years	Over Next 5 Years
TOTAL	86	85	89	88
TOTAL ACADEMIC	89	85	90	94
CARL	100	96	100	100
Other Academic	84	80	86	91
TOTAL PUBLIC	86	86	89	88
CULC	89	92	92	96
Other Public	85	84	87	85
TOTAL SPECIAL	83	82	89	85
Government	75	73	88	79
Non-Profit	89	86	92	86

Role Shifts

- Traditional librarian duties are being taken on in an increasing capacity by paraprofessional staff
- 78% of institutions reported that paraprofessionals have taken on more of these responsibilities over the past 5 years
- Role shift will continue to over the next 5 years

Table K.5: Supply Indicators of Librarian Interest in Performing Management and Leadership Roles by Library Sector (Individual Survey; n=2,000)

Percent Reporting “It is Important to . . . have a job that allows me to . . . “

Library Sector	Management Role/Functions		Leadership Role/Functions		
	Manage a Service/ Department	Supervise Others	Perform a Leadership Role	Motivate Others	Seek Out New Project Opportunities
TOTAL	44	36	62	64	74
TOTAL ACADEMIC	37	32	60	63	77
TOTAL PUBLIC	52	44	67	68	73
TOTAL SPECIAL	41	30	59	55	72
SCHOOL	49	18	58	79	79

Implications

- Librarians much more interested in leadership than management
- Management and leadership competencies need earlier development?
 - ◆ 6 of 10 librarians currently manage or supervise
 - ◆ 6 of 10 librarians' need to manage / lead increased over the past 5 years
- Library work is fundamentally about service and people – and not just for patrons, but staff as well

Table H.2: Librarians Needing Significant Training by Career Level of Librarian by Library Sector (Institutional Survey; n=270)

Percent Needing a Significant Amount of Training

Library Sector	Recent Librarian Entrants	Mid-Level Librarians	Senior-Level Librarians
TOTAL	72	43	36
TOTAL ACADEMIC	77	46	36
CARL	89	54	40
Other Academic	69	39	33
TOTAL PUBLIC	72	44	39
CULC	97	56	46
Other Public	62	39	35
TOTAL SPECIAL	66	35	33
Government	63	35	26
Non-Profit	74	40	43

Implications

- Significant levels of training still needed for mid-career and senior librarians
- High proportions of CULC and CARL libraries that state new entrants require significant amounts of training
 - ◆ large institutions clearly have more complex and demanding expectations
 - ◆ smaller organizations might be more concerned with traditional functions and formats of service delivery

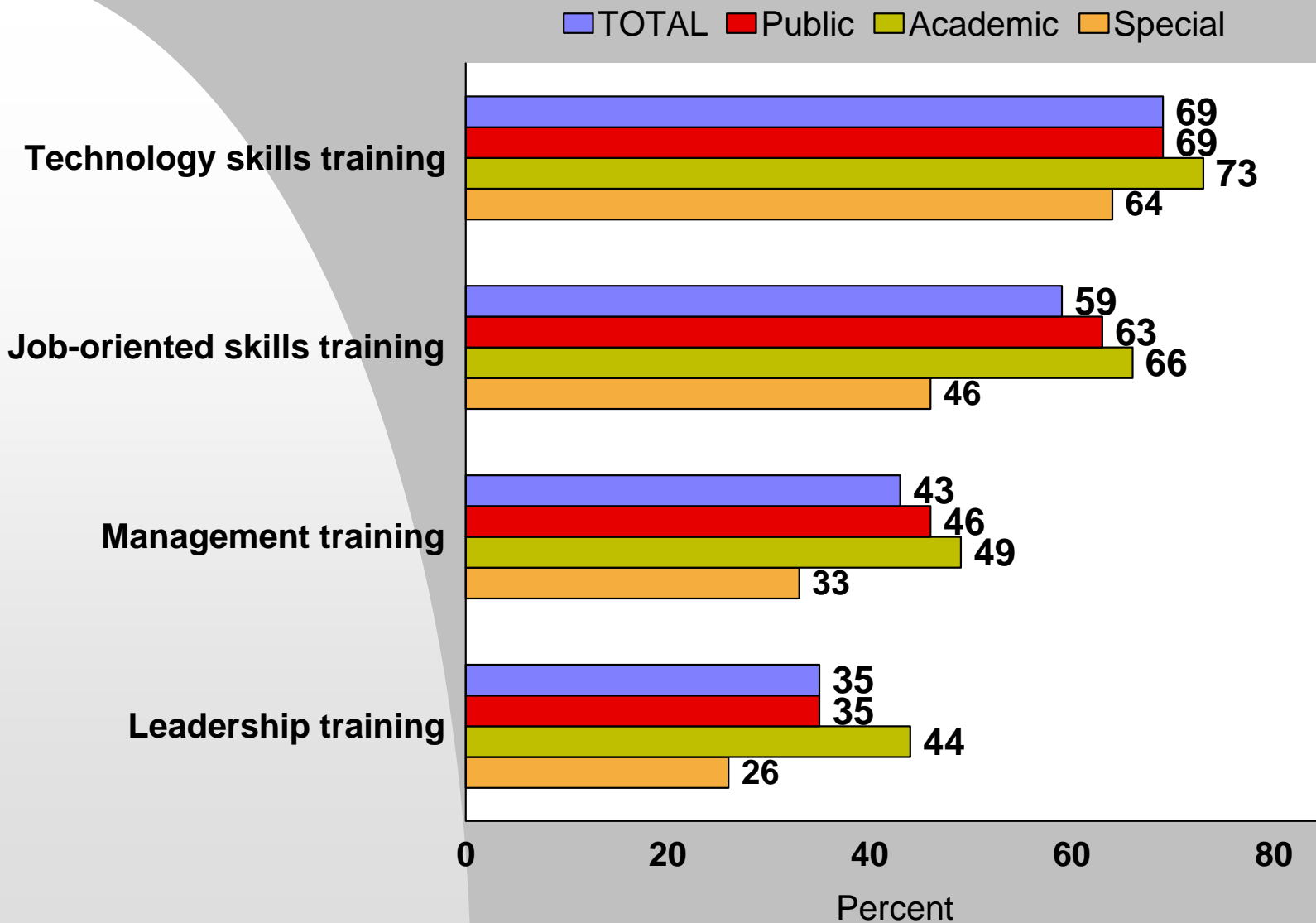
Table H.3: Organization Provides Sufficient Opportunities to Participate in Training by Career Stage by Library Sector
 (Professional Librarians Only; Individual Survey; n=1,897)

Library Sector	Percent "Agreeing"		
	Recent Librarian Entrants	Mid-Career Librarians	Senior-Career Librarians
TOTAL	56	56	60
TOTAL ACADEMIC	64	61	67
CARL	73	67	70
Other Academic	46	52	61
TOTAL PUBLIC	52	51	55
CULC	46	51	56
Other Public	61	50	53
TOTAL SPECIAL	49	57	59
Government	51	61	58
Non-Profit	50	47	56
For-Profit	--	--	71
SCHOOL	--	--	42

Implications

- Institutions believe that all staff need significant amounts of training to some extent
- 40-44% of staff say that institutions are not providing adequate training
- The picture is similar for paraprofessionals, of whom only 44% stated that there are sufficient opportunities to participate in training provided by their institution
- If paraprofessionals' roles are becoming more complex, then they need more attention to development

Types of Training Provided to Librarians by Library Sector



Implications

- Numbers of libraries offering training in management and leadership skills doesn't match demand for these roles
- Libraries need to look at the big picture competencies, not just the day-to-day skills
- 45% of MLIS graduates in 2000 over age of 35
 - ◆ Transitional gap between incoming professionals: digital natives vs. digital immigrants
 - ◆ New graduates leaving school without IT curricula relevant to their abilities?
 - ◆ How much will new young librarians be able to bring their 'digital native' perspective into the organization?
 - ◆ Need to keep pace with the new, ever-changing user
- Recertification of library professionals?
- What do we do best?
 - ◆ Certification in 'library culture' for IT professionals?

Global Implications

- ◆ Shifting roles experienced between librarian and paraprofessional staff
 - ★ Base education programs
 - ★ Continuing professional development
- ◆ Library programs must consider the real-world demands that both institutions and staff experience
- ◆ Leadership and management potential and competencies of new and existing staff
- ◆ Professional development and training opportunities for staff

Who Should Take Responsibility?

- MLIS schools
- Library technician schools
- Library associations
- Libraries
- Library staff

Charge to the Community

- Recruitment isn't about numbers, but about qualities and competencies
 - ◆ Management, leadership, IT
- Recruitment isn't just to institutions, but to the profession
 - ◆ Convergence between the profession and the schools
- Recognize potential in staff and create structures to encourage growth
- Commit to development of all library workers
 - ◆ Take on leadership and management development as core competencies to be nurtured within the workforce
 - ◆ What do we do best?
- Understand the competencies new librarians are bringing with them; how do they see the future of libraries?

The 8Rs Research Team

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ÉTUDE SUR LES RESSOURCES HUMAINES DANS
LES BIBLIOTHÈQUES CANADIENNES