

Department of Justice

LIBRARIES

LIBRARY SUCCESSION PLAN

**FINDINGS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

LIBRARY SUCCESSION PLANNING GROUP

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Executive Summary

In 2007, Blane Dessy, Director of the Department of Justice Library staff appointed a group of library staff members to develop a Library Succession Plan. In general terms, succession planning entails assessing the current workforce situation to better adjust to the changing workforce environment of the future, most specifically developing a plan to adjust to the changing workforce environment of the future, including developing a plan to address succession of current workers as they leave the workforce due to retirement, attrition, etc.

Succession planning will play a critical role in ensuring that library staffing levels and skill sets rely not only on recruiting new librarians and library technicians, but also retaining incumbent library staff in support of the future of the DOJ Library's mission. As it stands today, 40% of the library staff is eligible to retire within the next 5 years, 21% within 3 years, and 13% is eligible to retire today. The DOJ Library staff faces a leadership and knowledge management exodus that is unmatched in its history; therefore, it is paramount that we quickly focus on both developing leaders from within the library staff, as well as replacing key employees throughout our organization. Toward this goal, it will take deliberate and systematic efforts to ensure DOJ libraries have continuity in their key positions and that we retain and develop intellectual capital for the future and encourage individual advancement for the much anticipated retirement wave that lies ahead of us. Furthermore, rapid technological advances, scarce budgets, and diminishing physical space, indicative not only to libraries in general, but to the DOJ Library as well, also make planning for the future increasingly important.

The shifting nature of library work, changes in the allocation of budget resources due to the increase of electronic resources and decrease of reliance on print collections; and the unpredictability of budget resources in general, suggest that much like the dynamic and evolving library environment, the DOJ Library staff must be inadaptable, dynamic, and responsive in order to meet the Department of Justice Library mission. It is noted that the Library staff has already taken steps to address these issues. For example, library technicians are handling more online ready reference requests, changes in electronic resources versus print resources led the way for the development of the Patrick Henry Library Information Commons, and library staffs are routinely doing more with less.

To that end, the Library Succession Planning Group (LSPG) has written a plan of action for addressing the future needs of the library staff. In order to draft this plan, we read professional literature on succession planning in libraries, consulted succession plans written for internal and external organizations, and discussed as a group those elements that we thought were most important to our current and future needs. To inform these discussions, we used the resources noted above as well as a Workforce Assessment Survey that was completed by library staff throughout the organization. The survey results are discussed in more detail following our recommendations.

Succession Plan

- I. **Leadership** – How can we identify and encourage leaders at all levels of the organization? It is important that our culture continues to evolve with the philosophy and expectation that leaders can be found and developed in all levels of the organization; thus ensuring a collective responsibility for the challenge that fosters and lays the foundation for smooth leadership transitions. Leadership attributes can be divided into three broad categories: managerial qualities, personal characteristics, and knowledge about one's profession. By recognizing that no one employee would possess all the attributes of a successful leader, the library staff can take a proactive approach to developing leadership by integrating soft skills training in the areas of leadership and employee development that include management, personal development, and continued focus on the library profession. By doing so, the Library staff can harness the talent and skills needed to ensure the library will be well-placed to lay a solid foundation taking into account leadership transitions. Therefore, the LSPG makes the following suggestions to cultivate leadership throughout the staff:
- a. *Sustain an environment that fosters creativity, innovation and risk taking.* Creativity and innovation can be as simple as creating new ways of doing business. New ideas can lead to programs that are superior to those that are already in place or planned. Therefore, sustaining a creative, safe work environment in which people can take risks and try out new ideas stimulates the existing staff to be more creative and innovative thus allowing further development of these leadership components.
 - b. *Develop a multi-dimensional mentorship program.* Mentoring can provide opportunities for interaction between new and established professionals on staff; and, opportunities for interaction between management and professionals on staff.
 - c. *Provide and encourage participation in leadership, management and library profession training programs*
 - DOJ Leadership Excellence Achievement (LEAP) Program
 - FLICC/Fedlink
 - OCLC CAPCON
 - Special Libraries Association
 - USDA Graduate School
 - d. *Encourage and support involvement in professional organizations.* Professional organizations provide an opportunity to explore new roles and develop new talents, which in turn create and offer people extended opportunities for growth on the job.
 - e. *Support and encourage teamwork.* Teams that are responsible for accomplishing specific tasks within the library serve not only as a tool for achieving specific tasks, but also serve as a valuable tool for individuals to develop the ability to set priorities, lead and manage. Working together, group members not only have a responsibility to the team, they are afforded the experience and opportunity to further develop effective

communication skills, learn more about library functions, and actively participate in managing and shaping change.

II. **Professional Development** - How can we "grow" the skills/knowledge we need with the staff we already have?

- a. *Skills Gap/Workforce Assessment*: The Workforce Assessment Survey identified several areas where the staff felt they needed further training. These areas are outside the Library-centered focus in which much of our training is oriented (Lexis, WestLaw, etc.). Therefore, the LSPG recommends investigating programs through sources such as OCLC CAPCON, GoLearn.gov, and the USDA Grad School to address competencies, including those identified by the Workforce Assessment Survey. These would include courses in Customer Service, Leadership Development, Management Skills, Planning and Evaluation as well as technical training courses in using Windows-based applications.
- b. *Training*
 - *For non-supervisors*: While the number of hours of required training in the Performance Work Plan (PWP) is a minimum, employees should work with supervisors to determine if additional training is necessary. An annual evaluation of individual training needs and opportunities should be considered, to include discussion between supervisor and employee. Using core competencies and PWPs, management should assess whether training opportunities are available to address those items and see if there is a way to fill perceived gaps in training using internal resources. Management should also consider whether certain training should be mandatory -- for example, library training classes.
 - *For managers*: Consider instituting minimum training hours required, as with librarians and technicians, and whether certain management courses should be mandatory. Explore use of in-house programs, including LEAP, etc.
- c. *Individual Development Plans (IDP)* – Consider instituting IDPs on a voluntary or mandatory basis. From the JMD Budget Office Succession Plan: "The IDP serves as a valuable tool in setting goals, planning resources, outlining the employee's responsibilities, and gaining the supervisor's commitment to the employee's career development plans. The IDP should clearly articulate expectations, commitments, and time frames for training, rotations, and other developmental activities, as applicable. The IDP serves as the employee's roadmap for meeting his/her learning objectives and improving upon his/her core or leadership competencies or both."
- d. *Self-assessment* - To be completed by the employee annually (or even semi-annually). Used as a tool to help the supervisor in preparing the employee evaluation. Can also be used as a place for the employee to talk

about areas where he/she wants to develop. Perhaps use core competencies as a guide.

- e. *Professional Associations* – Many professional associations provide continuing education to members. Participation can be beneficial for career development. Employees should be encouraged to become members of associations and/or attend association events relevant to the Justice Libraries mission.
- f. *New Employee Orientations* - Formal orientation for new employees, to include at least visiting each library location and department should be developed and instituted for all new employees beginning with their first day on the job.

III. **Knowledge Management and Information Sharing** – How can we capture the institutional knowledge that we have and provide methods of sharing information?

- a. *Cross-Training* – No one should be irreplaceable, i.e. others should develop required skills and knowledge to be able to fill in when necessary. Cross-training should include rotating locations and perhaps even job responsibilities for a period of time in order to learn other jobs and the practices of other libraries.
- b. *Written Procedures* – Should be developed for each location and kept accessible (maybe even on the Virtual Library if they can be in a private area).
- c. *Best Practices* – If they haven't already, perhaps the library staff should consider developing "best practices" documents for library functions such as reference (including via QuestionPoint), cataloging, ILLs, etc.
- d. *Knowledge Base* – Knowledge Base through QuestionPoint, or similar instrument for keeping track of frequently asked questions and answers, and hard to find institutional knowledge should be developed.
- e. *Staff Bulletin* – Consider creating a monthly staff bulletin, or Wiki to share information and research tips, offer discards to other locations, and remind staff of upcoming events, classes, and meetings. This synergistic exchange of information would help encourage individual staff input and share the many useful and successful ideas that are implemented in the libraries.
- f. *Communication with Management* – Create an online question and answer forum between the staff and managers on JCON. This will encourage the free flow of communication on topics both large and small regardless of the number of people it may affect. It will also reduce the number of times the question is brought to management's attention and provide clarification. Questions submitted could also be addressed at the quarterly staff, manager, and library technician meetings. Since these questions would be submitted anonymously, the employee will feel free to ask questions that they may not otherwise feel comfortable asking.

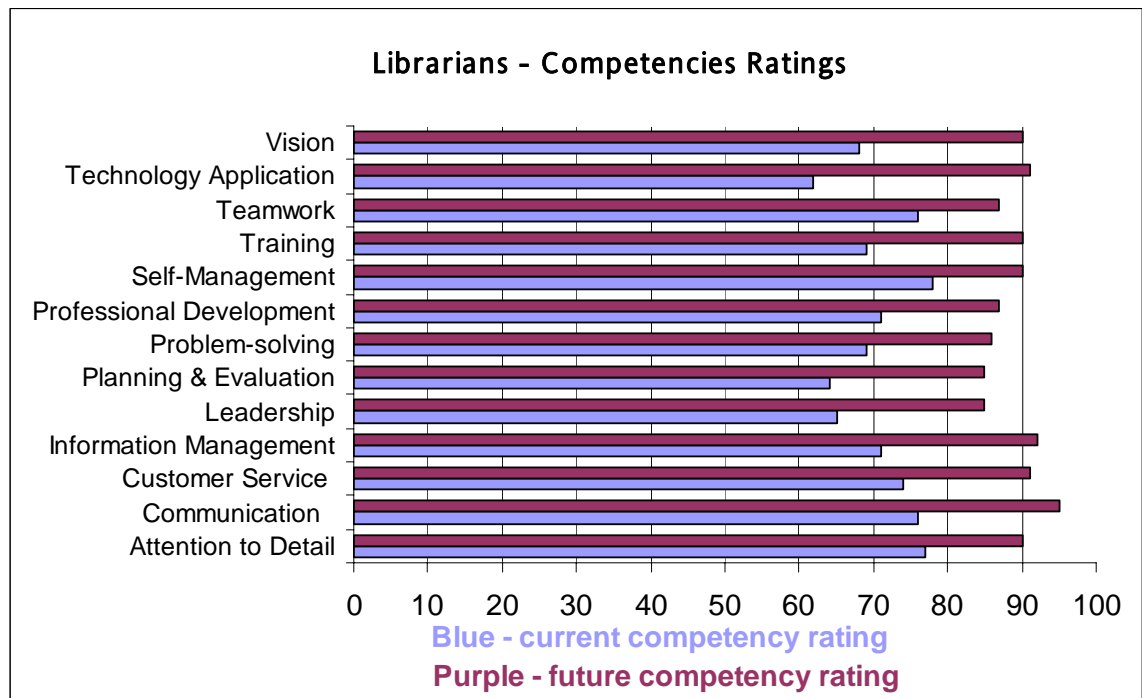
- IV. **Future Hiring** – How do we attract the best employees to fit the needs that we have?
- a. *Job announcements* – Consider having a committee look at the announcements and see if there are things we can change to make them as useful as possible. Identify skills we need that might not be reflected in KSAs and/or position descriptions. Possibly meet with HR and see if they can help us. Also see if we can talk to them about their process and how to make it work for us.
 - b. *Attracting people* – Develop contacts with library schools, professional associations, and other library communities.
 - c. *Interns* – Continue to develop an intern program so future librarians can develop a sense of what it would be like to work for the Justice Libraries and we can try them out as well.
- V. **Mentoring Program** - How do we maximize staff potential and attract quality candidates?
- a. *Solicit staff participation* - A Mentoring Program Committee should be created that would design, monitor, and evaluate this program. The committee would begin by drafting and disseminating to all staff a questionnaire inquiring:
 - Interest in serving as either a mentor, a mentee, or both
 - Professional goals, interests
 - Any other matter deemed relevant and appropriate. Assignment of mentors and mentees would occur by committee.
 - b. *Train mentors* - To ensure success in the program, training in the art of mentoring would need to be provided.
 - c. *Establish mentoring program with measurable goals* - Goal of this program should be to give individuals a real opportunity to learn and develop skills for positions they currently have (if they are newer employees), as well as for jobs they aspire to hold. Supervisors will need to provide staff enough time for mentors and mentees to meet and shadow each other for a certain amount of time, attend training and meetings together, etc.
 - d. *Evaluate program on a six month and yearly basis* - Mentoring Program Committee should create an evaluation form for both mentors and mentees. If either party feels goals of mentoring are not being met, the Committee would step in and talk with parties, and perhaps even supervisors, and provide suggestions to help all the parties come up with a mutually agreeable plan.
 - e. *Benefits of a strong mentoring program* – Mentors and mentees would feel that 1) they have learned something about each other and 2) the profession. Staff would have a better sense regarding what skills would be necessary to work in certain jobs which could then be used to gear their own training with an eye towards those positions. A well-organized and vibrant mentoring program would be a strong selling point when trying to recruit new employees that will likely be needed in the next few years.

VI. **Workforce Assessment Survey.** Based on discussions with human resources personnel and taking in to account the importance of assessing current skill levels from the succession planning literature review, the LSPG developed a workforce assessment survey (see Appendix A). The assessment survey was developed using the existing library staff competencies and also took into account the context of the evolving information flow and related work processes from across the organization. These dynamic data sets allowed for the development of the survey assessment that was administered to librarians and library technicians from both the public and technical services groups.

The workforce assessment survey was rolled-out to the Library Staff at the All-Staff Meeting in November 2007. The survey was introduced as a proactive effort to prepare the Library for the future and highlighted the changes that are taking place in the library; changes that are impacting the library staff such as the near-term potential retirement of many long-term employees and the rapid changes that are taking place in the library field in general. The results of the survey distinguish gaps existing between current and future competency requirements.

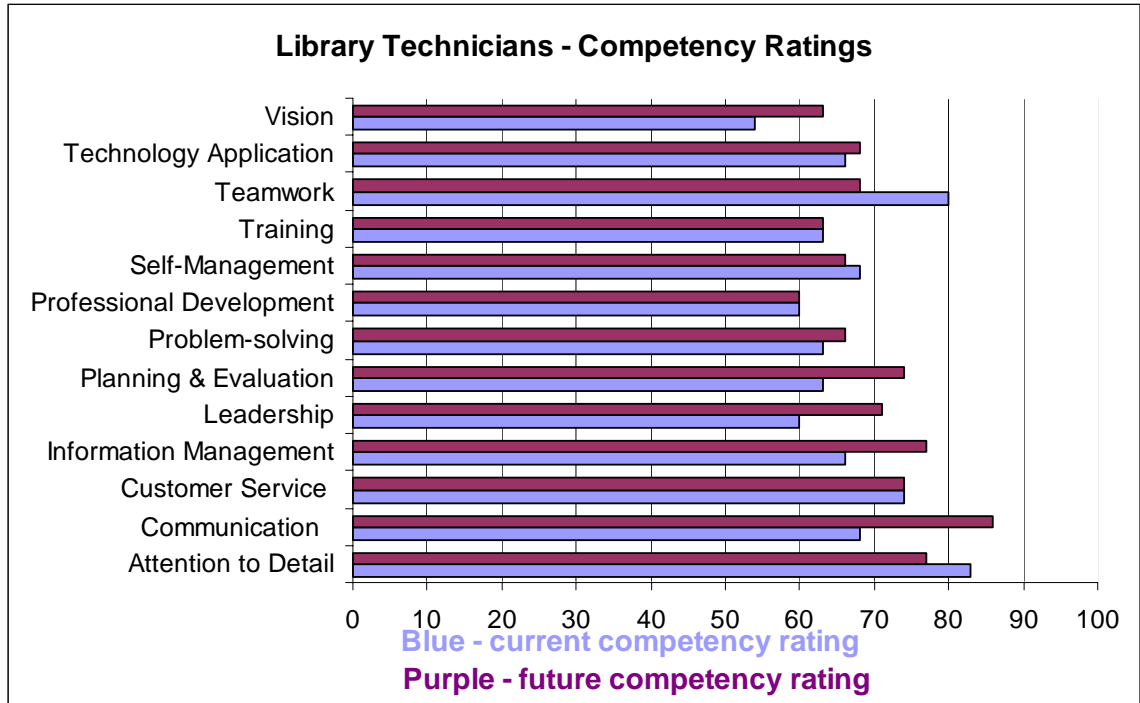
Key findings from the workforce assessment results for the librarian on staff who completed the survey indicate that Technology Application (29 point gap), Planning & Evaluation (21 point gap), and Leadership (20 point gap) are three prevalent current versus future competency gaps.

Chart 1



Key findings from the workforce assessment results for as rated by the library technicians on staff that completed the survey indicate that Communication (18 point gap), Information Management, Leadership, and Planning & Evaluation (11 point gaps) are the areas with the most prevalent current versus future competency gaps.

Chart 2



As a final point, many of the comments (see Appendix B) from the workforce assessment reflect the LSPG groups recommendations.

Appendix A

Workforce Skills Analysis Tool For DOJ Library Staff

As part of the Library's succession planning process, this survey was drafted to identify what skills and competencies are currently being used in our positions, which ones we believe would benefit from training, as well as which ones we think we will need in the future in order to best support the Department's mission. It may very well be that there are some skills you use now that you feel will not be as critical in the future, or vice versa. Since this survey is anonymous, feel free to be as candid as you feel is needed. Thank you for your assistance as we take a critical look at what we need to do as a staff to best plan for the future!

On the following pages, please indicate:

- What degree of competency **you currently have**
- What degree of competency **is currently needed** to accomplish your work
- What degree of competency you believe **will be required in the future** to accomplish your work

Please use the following scale:

1 = Awareness

- Demonstrates awareness of concepts and processes.
- Require close and extensive guidance.

2 = Basic

- Demonstrates familiarity with concepts and processes.
- Requires frequent guidance.

3 = Intermediate

- Demonstrates understanding of concepts and processes.
- Requires occasional guidance.

4 = Advanced

- Demonstrates broad understanding of concepts and processes.
- Generally requires little or no guidance.

5 = Expert

- Demonstrates comprehensive, expert understanding of concepts and processes.
- Serves as a key resource and advises others.

Example:

Job Title: Cataloger

Competency	Description	Have Now	Needed Now	Required in Future
Attention to detail	Is thorough when performing duties and reviews all aspects of work, both big and small, for completeness and accuracy.	3	4	5

Job Title _____

Competency	Description	Have Now	Needed Now	Required in Future
Attention to detail	Is thorough when performing duties and reviews all aspects of work, both significant and minor, for completeness and accuracy.			
Communication	Provides information to individuals or groups using proper English grammar; takes into account audience and technical nature of information when sharing ideas (verbally and non-verbally); willingly accepts feedback; responds appropriately to both written and non-verbal feedback.			
Customer Service & Marketing	Anticipates needs of customers and proactively responds; whenever possible, provides a variety of options to meet needs; interacts with customers in a friendly, courteous and empathetic manner; markets library services and programs through formal and informal venues.			
Information management	Knows how to identify and gather information; determines accuracy and relevance of information sources; organizes and maintains information and information management systems; provides high-quality library service using a variety of sources and materials to meet those needs.			
Leadership	Influences, motivates, and challenges others; adapts leadership style to a variety of situations; acts as a good role model in the workplace; gives appropriate support and guidance when asking others to perform new or different tasks.			
Planning and Evaluating	Organizes work, sets priorities, determines resource requirements; identifies short- and long-term goals and develops strategies to achieve them; coordinates effectively with other offices or organizations; monitors progress and evaluates outcomes.			
Problem-Solving	Identifies problems; uses sound judgment to evaluate the situation; designs and implements new methods and procedures for problem-solving where established methods and procedures are inapplicable, outdated, or unavailable.			
Professional Development	Sets applicable goals and uses feedback, experience and training for self improvement; promotes collaboration, teamwork, and partnership among co-workers; uses these skills to drive innovation in library and services.			

Appendix B
Succession Planning Workforce Assessment
Comments by Librarians

Technology – Technology will continue to be a problem for the department, but the impact on the library will shape our mission.

Funding – We need to use other people’s end of the year money more effectively.

Younger employees will not accept DOJ’s technological limits!

Lifelong learning – hallmark of our profession

Plot strategy for new employee hiring

Outstanding communications and socialization skills are imperative.

Promotion, marketing, public relations and advertising skills are necessary.

Budget and finance insights are invaluable.

Space and human capital planning abilities are needed.

Information management systems training in knowledge and preservation

Flexibility – How quickly and confidently we adapt to changes and are willing to implement new ideas.

Many of the competencies can be improved through training. I would like to see the library offer more training on non-research topics. Also I would hope that the planning committee recognizes the ability to lead those not in management and/or not planning to move into management. Leadership can come from anywhere in an organization.
THANKS FOR ALL THE HARD WORK!

Think about the “knowledge” that’s walking out the door with each retirement. Is there some way to capture it? Do we conduct exit interviews? Do we do written exit surveys? Are retirees required to fill out a descriptive form that describes how and what each one does? Can that information then be shared with the remaining or new employees?

How about creating a central registry that keeps track of training events that each librarian has attended. That way, we could see who has what new knowledge or skills.

Writing down procedures in each library (each person write the procedures for their job) would really help. Then they can be examined and improved upon if appropriate.

Making sure there is proper & adequate training for incoming employees so they are not left to figure it out on their own.

Addendum

On May 6th, 2008, the Library Succession Planning Group met with Blane Dessy, Director of the DOJ Library; Jane Sanchez, Assistant Director of Reference and Research; and Dennis Feldt, Assistant Director of Access and Organization. The meeting involved a review and discussion of the Succession Planning Report, which ultimately resulted in the following proposed plans of action:

I. Leadership

1. Create a curriculum geared toward supplementing specific skills gaps

II. Professional Development

1. Based on the workforce assessment results, incorporate training for librarians that focuses on
 - a) Technology applications
 - b) Planning and evaluation
 - c) Leadership
2. Based on the workforce assessment results, incorporate training for library technicians that focuses on
 - a) Communication
 - b) Leadership
 - c) Information management
3. Individual Development Plans
 - a) Consider voluntary implementation
 - b) Consider pilot program 08/09 for early adapters
4. Employee orientations
 - a) Create an orientation program for new employees using a checklist method

III. Knowledge Management

1. Establish a cross training program
2. Create written procedures for all libraries
3. Create “best practices” documents to share with all staff for each job/process to include managers, librarians, and library technicians
4. Develop a staff Wiki
5. Continue with the development of a knowledge base in Question Point
6. Develop an anonymous question/suggestion employee process (possibly electronic on the Staff Corner of the Virtual Library)

IV. Future Hiring

1. Develop an AVUE template using language that will better represent/reflect our hiring requirements

V. Mentoring Program

1. Create a mentoring program that incorporates cross-training and expands our mentor pool to a broader community of professionals outside the DOJ Library staff