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Information Literacy and the Workforce

Sharon A. Weiner
sweiner@purdue.edu

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Information Literacy and the Workforce

Sharon Weiner, EdD, MLS, AHIP

Professor, W. Wayne Booker Chair in Information Literacy

Purdue University

sweiner@purdue.edu

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LIBRARIES

Access. Knowledge. Success.

Outline

- Introduction to workforce IL
- Industry, organization, research reports
- Implications

Introduction: Importance

- Necessary for adaptability to changing jobs, competitiveness
- W. Wayne Booker
- Annemarie Lloyd
- 2000-

Introduction: Attributes

Employees have different information needs and information seeking behaviors than students

Kirton & Barham, 2005

Introduction: Attributes

- Infolit has different “names” in different sectors
- 21st century skill
- Essential for workforce readiness
- Less about tools, more about a way of thinking

Introduction: National Developments

President Obama, National Information Literacy Awareness Month

Rather than merely possessing data, we must also learn the skills necessary to acquire, collate, and evaluate information for any situation. This new type of literacy also requires competency with communication technologies.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/presidential-proclamation-national-information-literacy-awareness-month>

Introduction: National Developments

National Forum on Information Literacy
celebrated 20th anniversary

http://infolit.org/20th_anniversary/20th_anniversary.html

Important Skills for Workforce

Adobe

American Management Association

Corporate Voices for Working Families

George Lucas Educational Foundation

Hart Associates for AACU

IFLA

National Forum on Information Literacy

New Media Consortium

Partnership for 21st Century Skills

Society for Human Resource Management

The Conference Board

UNESCO

Important Skills for Workforce

- Critical thinking, problem solving, analytical reasoning skills
- Teamwork/collaboration
- Lifelong learning/self direction
- Ability to communicate effectively, orally and in writing
- Ability to locate, organize, evaluate information from multiple sources

Important Skills for Workforce

Employers said ensuring that college students develop skills to **research questions in their field and develop evidence-based analyses** would help a lot/fair amount to prepare them for success.

http://www.aacu.org/leap/documents/2009_EmployerSurvey.pdf

What is different about workplace IL?

- Tasks and problems are:
 - Complex, messy, open-ended
 - Not routine
 - Difficult to analyze
 - Employ different approaches to information seeking and use

What is different about workplace IL?

- Beyond skills—they become obsolete quickly in the workplace
- Context specific, not generic
- Less focus on identifying information need

Hepworth & Smith, 2008

What is workplace infolit?

- Workforce information literacy is:
 - Socio-cultural practice
 - Informs learning in the workplace and is informed by it
 - Holistic practice
 - Transformative

Lloyd, 2010

Social aspects essential to workforce learning

- People learn together
- Human relationships have a key role in development of intellect in the workplace

Crawford & Irving, 2009

Information-seeking

- Getting information is not the same as getting an answer

Cheuk, 2000

Influences on staff management of information

- Time management
- Info overload, find relevant info, needs judgment
- Social networking skills, connect with people, ask precise, accurate questions
- Listening
- Teamwork skills

Hepworth & Smith, 2008

Barriers to Infolit in Workplace

- Infolit terminology
- Different ways of thinking in workplace and education
- Employers expect workers to have infolit competency when hired

Cheuk, 2002

Barriers to Infolit in Workplace

- 21st century literacy is not well understood
- There is insufficient research to demonstrate that it is of value
- For most institutions, there is no clear incentive to change

http://www.nmc.org/pdf/Global_Imperative.pdf

Horizon Report 2010

“Critical Challenge”

- Widespread agreement on its importance, but college **training in digital literacy skills** is “virtually non-existent”
- Lack of formal training offset through professional development or informal learning
- Digital media literacy not the norm

<http://wp.nmc.org/horizon2010/chapters/challenges/>

Who is Responsible for Workforce Readiness?

- 80% of employers think **K-12 schools** bear primary responsibility for preparing new entrants to work
- 66% said **4-year colleges** and universities
- 51% believe that the **graduates** themselves are responsible

Casner-Lotto & Silvert, 2008

Workforce Training

- Half of employers surveyed provide remedial training programs because of deficiencies in expected skills in new hires
- Majority of companies find these programs to be moderately or somewhat successful at best

Workforce Training

- One-on-one coaching, mentoring most effective methods to improve employees' skills in these areas
- Managers believe it is easier to develop these skills in students than in experienced workers

*[http://www.p21.org/documents/
Critical%20Skills%20Survey%20Executive%20Summary.pdf](http://www.p21.org/documents/Critical%20Skills%20Survey%20Executive%20Summary.pdf)*

Focus of Research on Workplace Infolit

- Training, service and administrative sectors
- Skills
- Transfer of infolit skills from education to workplace
- Workplace information use
- Information seeking behavior

Lloyd, 2010

Sample Workplace Policy

Organizations must demonstrate that education, training, and access to learning and library resources are available on an equitable and flexible basis to all staff, including, part time, community, evening and night shift workers and those working in remote locations.

U.K. National Health Service Lifelong learning policy(2001)

Recommendations

- Raise awareness
 - Include information literacy in professional development
 - Enlist professional organizations
 - Build recognition programs that will promote innovation and models

Recommendations

- Work as a community
 - Leverage the interest and skills of those already involved in 21st century literacies
 - Build linkages among experts in the field

Recommendations

- Develop strategic research agenda
- Make tools for creating and experiencing new media broadly available
- Develop strategies for teaching and assessing workplace infolit

*Cheuk, 2002; http://www.nmc.org/pdf/Global_Imperative.pdf;
http://www.p21.org/documents/21st_century_skills_education_and_competitiveness_guide.pdf*

Conclusion

*Information literacy is the skill of choice
for...success*

*The challenge is to bring it to the
workplace*

Goad, 2002

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