



Library Support Staff Certification Program
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LSSCP Marketing Survey: Results and Commentary
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January 13, 2009

1. Description of Respondents.

- 565 people responded, and all but 64¹ were from academic or public libraries.
- All but five states were represented; four states had 30 or more participants. Almost all participants from Wyoming and Illinois were from public libraries; Virginia was fairly even and California was a bit more academic.
- Half of respondents have worked in libraries for 11 or more years; 24% of respondents worked for 11-19 years and 25% of respondents worked in libraries for 20 or more years.
- Academic library respondents are somewhat more likely to have more experience.

2. 73% of respondents are either somewhat or very interested in the LSSCP.

- Respondents with up to 20 years of work history are more likely to be somewhat or very interested in LSSCP than those with 20 plus years of experience.
- Interest dips somewhat in the 4-7 year experience level, but is otherwise high until the 19-year mark.

3. Respondents' interest is much lower without employer support.

- Asked directly, only 32% consider themselves likely or very likely to participate in the absence of employer support. Public library respondents are slightly more likely to be interested, but not by much.
- Respondents' overall interest level (very interested to not at all) was compared to their anticipated employers' support level. This comparison showed, roughly, that the greater the level of employer support, the higher the interest level.

4. A relationship exists between participation in existing certification program and an interest in the LSSCP, but the small numbers of respondents who participate in their state's certification programs make it difficult to draw conclusions.

¹ Due to my data-coding error, 10 of the respondents were mistakenly categorized as "two-year" when they actually were "other." There are 49 in the "two-year" group of which 39 really are "two-year."

- Very few respondents overall (32 total) and very few academic (9) participate in a certification program.
5. The survey found no difference between the level of respondents' interest and the size of the library in which they work.
 - Public library respondents are on average more interested in the program than academic library respondents. Within academic libraries, interest did not differ by FTE and within public libraries; interest did not differ by service population.
 6. Respondents reported a high level of CE activity.
 - 93% of respondents have engaged in CE in the last 12 months, and 27% had done so more than five times. This existing level of activity presents an opportunity for LSSCP certification activities to be considered part of normal operations.
 - A third of respondents anticipated some substantial financial support (full, partial or courses) from their employers, with one quarter expecting only the fee or release time, and 41% responding "none" or "I don't know."
 7. Respondents' top reason for participation was to learn more about the library field.
 - 410 respondents selected at least one reason for participating:
 - The most commonly selected reasons (in order) were learning, achieving recognition, and providing better service; job and pay factors were least often selected.
 - Public library respondents were the most interested in "providing better service;" academic library respondents were disproportionately interested in a promotion.
 8. Respondents who plan to participate would do so in the first year.
 - 70% of respondents anticipated participating in the first year. Most of the rest said they don't know when they would participate. It may be necessary to plan either for a slow start as the program becomes known OR for a "hump" as unmet needs come in a rush, before a 'replacement' level sets in.
 9. Respondents who were uncertain of their involvement choose time constraints or cost as the reasons for their uncertainty.
 - 79 respondents selected reasons why they were uncertain. Public library respondents were more concerned about "no time" (both here and in "not interested") while academic library respondents more frequently selected cost issues.
 10. 35 respondents, who would not participate, said that they were uncertain of the value of the program. 49 respondents gave reasons for non-participation, as follows.
 - 17 respondents either have or are working on their MLS.
 - Six are near retirement.

- Other reasons include that they have other credentials, there is no relation to job or salary, they already have high positions, or other.

11. Fee reactions findings.

- Overall, one person said that the fee was “too low;” 42% thought that it was “about right.”
- Respondents who are least experienced (1-3 years) and most experienced (20+ years) were most likely to consider it too high.
- There is no significant difference in responses by library type.
- Fifty-one respondents provided comments on the fee structure.
 - The biggest issues were a comparison to LSS salaries and ability to pay; comparison to other certification or license costs; and the cost compared to the life-span of the certification.