These competencies are fundamental to understanding the mission and roles of libraries. They cover the ethics, values, and governance of libraries, and the basic knowledge needed for all positions in a library.

1. **Library Support Staff (LSS) know the mission and roles of a library in its community and the mission of libraries in general.**

   **Portfolio Development Suggestions**

   1.1 Research what should be in a mission statement. Review a mission statement from two different types of libraries. Compare and contrast the mission statements. Based on your research, evaluate the statements and recommend if they should be revised and if so, how.

   1.2 Review the Public Library Association’s *Public Library Service Responses* as one way of looking at a public library’s role in its community. Select a public library and describe what factors might determine which of these roles this library might choose and why. Share your recommendations with at least two staff members at the library and discuss their comments.

   1.3 Research what should be in a mission statement. Identify the mission statement of your library or another library and do one of the following:

   (a) Write a revision of the mission statement. Explain the process you used and why you made the changes to at least two staff members and discuss their comments.

   (b) Recommend no changes in the library’s mission statement. Indicate why you feel it meets the criteria of a good mission statement.

2. **LSS know the ethics and values of the profession, including an understanding of the Library Bill of Rights, the ALA Code of Ethics, freedom of information, confidentiality of library records, and privacy issues.**

   **Portfolio Development Suggestions**

   2.1 Review the Library Bill of Rights, the ALA Code of Ethics, and any legislation in your state that relates to privacy of library records. Find out if your library’s governing body has adopted the Library Bill of Rights and the ALA Code of Ethics. If it has not, why not? Describe a situation in which you have or might have used these documents and laws.

   2.2 Apply the ideas of intellectual freedom, privacy, and confidentiality to tell what you would do in two of the following situations:
(a) The police chief asks you to provide records that document the library use of a person who s/he thinks is responsible for a series of thefts in the community. The chief explains to you that no one will know that you provided the records.

(b) The dean of students is concerned about a student who has expressed suicidal thoughts. The dean asks you to notify him if the student checks out materials on suicide.

(c) A parent wishes the library to limit his/her child’s use of the library to the materials in the children’s department.

(d) An alumnus, who has generously contributed to the library, believes that the library should only have materials that promote the community’s values.

3. **LSS know the roles of library support staff and other staff in different types of libraries.**

   **Portfolio Development Suggestions**

   3.1 Interview the manager of a department in two different types of libraries. Ask the manager to describe the different levels of library staff in the department and give a brief description of their duties. What criteria are used to determine whether a task is given to a support staff member or a librarian? Describe and comment on the differences among staff positions and between the two types of libraries.

   3.2 Interview a library support staff member and a librarian in the same department in two different types of libraries. Ask them how their roles differ and how these roles interact. What similarities and differences do you see among the staff in each library and between the two libraries? What do you think are the most important differences and why?

4. **LSS know the responsibilities of and the relationships among library departments or functional areas.**

   **Portfolio Development Suggestions**

   4.1 Interview the manager in two different types of libraries with many departments to find out how these departments interact to produce, distribute, and help library users use information. What are the differences between the two types of libraries? What do you think one library might learn from the other on productive relationships among departments?

   4.2 A teenager asks for help with a research paper on the civil rights movement and the election of Barack Obama as president. Describe how every department in the library contributes to helping this user. Describe the impact on the student and library staff if any of the library departments do not do their work.
5. LSS know basic principles of:
   - reference and information services;
   - circulation, including interlibrary loan and collection maintenance;
   - current cataloging and classification systems;
   - acquisitions and collection development.

Portfolio Development Suggestions

5.1 Observe library staff members who work in reference, circulation, cataloging, and classification, and acquisitions and collection development for a minimum of two hours. At the conclusion of your observations, summarize what you consider to be the five most important principles associated with that work. Ask the people you observed to review your work and discuss their responses. Did this review change your thinking about the principles? If yes, how?

6. LSS know how libraries are governed and funded, including how libraries fit within larger organizations or government structures.

Portfolio Development Suggestions

6.1 Identify a governing structure for public and academic libraries in your state. Compare and contrast these structures. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each?

6.2 Describe how a library fits into a city or county government structure, a school district structure, and a higher education structure. What is the organizational structure like in each type of library? Describe the reporting structure and source of funding. Describe the similarities and differences that you discover.

7. LSS know the value of cooperating with other libraries to enhance services.

Portfolio Development Suggestions

7.1 Describe at least two cooperative arrangements in which different types of libraries participate. These arrangements may be statewide, national, or local networks, or cooperatives. What are the arrangements’ benefits and liabilities for their members and for the library user? How does the library promote these services?

7.2 A community member suggests that the library stop cooperating with other libraries because he believes that the library will save money by doing so. Write a short statement explaining why cooperative arrangements are important and cost efficient for library users and libraries.

8. LSS understand their responsibility to pursue all available means to keep their knowledge and skills current, including involvement in professional associations.

Portfolio Development Suggestions
8.1 Identify three professional development opportunities you have participated in the past two years. How did you change your job performance based on what you learned in these workshops?

8.2 Your state’s library association wants to recruit more library support staff as members and asks you to develop a statement on the benefits of joining the association. Write a short statement introducing the association’s benefits to library support staff and tell how you would distribute this statement.

8.3 The library director in the library where you work has been asked to reduce the library’s budget by cutting the continuing education budget. The director asks you to help her justify keeping dollars for continuing education by developing a short statement for the library board, the school principal, or the dean of education. Prepare a statement in defense of the CE budget.

9. LSS understand the basic principles of and practice quality customer service.

Portfolio Development Suggestions

9.1 Identify and describe six important elements of customer service. Identify the sources of your information. Rank the six elements in your opinion of their importance and tell why you put them in that order. Discuss if the elements and rank would be different for a different type size of library.

9.2 Describe three scenarios that illustrate poor customer service and three that illustrate good customer service. Prepare a video, audiotape, or provide a script that demonstrates your scenarios. Describe or show how you would correct the examples of poor customer service.

9.3 Describe one new customer service initiative that might benefit a library and discuss how and why it might be effective.

10. LSS communicate and promote the library’s mission and services to staff, volunteers, users, and the community.

Portfolio Development Suggestions

10.1 Describe what you think are your library’s top four values. Survey four other members of the staff and compare their answers with yours. How are they alike or different and why? How does your library promote its values? How do these values impact services?

10.2 Describe five ways a library has communicated and promoted its services in the past two years. How is the library’s mission expressed through the services? Describe the opportunities you see to incorporate the library’s mission into promotional materials.
11. LSS recognize and respond to diversity in user needs and preferences for resources and services.

Portfolio Development Suggestions

11.1 Identify three groups of diverse users that use library services. Describe and evaluate current library services that meet the needs of these groups. What new or additional services might be added to meet their needs? What evidence might you collect to show that these new or additional services are needed?

11.2 Identify a group that does not typically use library services. Describe how you would assess their needs, adapt current or adopt new library services to meet their needs, and promote these services to this group.

12. LSS demonstrate the ability and willingness to uphold policies and decisions and know when exceptions are appropriate.

Portfolio Development Suggestions

12.1 Choose a policy area and find policies from two different types of libraries. Compare and contrast these two policies. How do the libraries communicate the policy to staff members and library users? Under what circumstances can staff make exceptions?

12.2 Compare the same policy in two different types of libraries. Select the policy you think is best and explain why or how each is appropriate based on that type of library. Are the policies up-to-date? If not, how would you update the policy to include current technologies, services, or changes in librarianship? What authority do the staff have to make exceptions to the policy?