Technology Competency Set (Required)
Portfolio Development Suggestions
October, 2012

These competencies address the skills and knowledge about technology necessary for library work. They also address the role of providing access to and educating the user in the use of technologies and equipment relevant to information seeking, access, and use.

1. **Library Support Staff (LSS) know the general trends and developments in technology applications for library functions and services.**

   Portfolio Development Suggestions

   1.1 Describe two recently adopted technology applications used in two different library departments. Describe what processes or services changed after these departments adopted the new applications and how these changes affected library users and staff.

   1.2 Describe three emerging technologies that might be used in a library. Discuss the pros and cons of each technology and how it might be used by or benefit library users and staff in a library.

   1.3 Discuss three social media tools. Discuss the pros and cons of using each tool and how a library can use each tool to benefit library users and staff.

   1.4 Discuss three technologies or products a library has implemented to improve the ability of staff and/or users to remotely connect to library resources. How was the decision made to offer these specific technologies? How did the library prepare users? What problems did library staff have to solve before and after implementation? How would you determine if the implementation was successful?

2. **LSS know the role and responsibility of libraries for introducing relevant applications of technology, including digital literacy, to the public.**

   Portfolio Development Suggestions

   2.1 Prepare an annotated bibliography of five articles on the role of libraries in introducing new technology services to their users, including at least one article on assistive technology and one on digital literacy. Your bibliography should be descriptive and evaluative. Analyze and discuss what steps a library should take to introduce a new technology for users.

   2.2 List potential access challenges that may face library users and employees with disabilities when they use library technology. How can a library meet these challenges? Using a reputable accessibility checklist, evaluate a web page or other electronic resource.
2.3 Describe a new technology that was implemented in a library. What was the purpose of the new technology? How did library users and staff members respond to the change and how did it effect library operations? What other impacts, intended or otherwise, did you observe? Did it improve library services and, if so, how? If it did not, what changes would you recommend?

3. **LSS know basic principles and best practices to ensure the integrity of data and the confidentiality of user activities.**

**Portfolio Development Suggestions**

3.1 Using a library’s policies and the Code of Ethics of the American Library Association (2008), describe how you would respond to the privacy issues raised by this scenario: You overhear a library coworker while s/he is reshelving books say to a library user, “I just love looking at your online circulation records to see what you’re reading. It’s so interesting! I enjoy reading anything you’ve checked out!” What security measures can a library take to ensure that circulation records are kept private?

3.2 Create a guide for library users, describing how a library ensures their privacy in such areas as the catalog, interlibrary loan requests, notification of reserves, and use of the Internet in the library.

3.3 Create a guide for library users, detailing best practices for defending their electronic information against at least three different security threats (for example, spam, phishing, viruses, unsecured wireless connections, or social networking identity theft).

4. **LSS know concepts and issues concerning the appropriate use of technology by different user groups.**

**Portfolio Development Suggestions**

4.1 Discuss what policies a library might have that indicate what technology is appropriate for different user groups such as children, teens, adults, seniors, or users with a specific type of disability. Include the reasons a library might have for such policies such as state or federal law, age, disability, language skill, library security, and consideration of the needs of all users.

4.2 Select four different groups of library users, including one with a disability (for example, children, teens, adults, seniors, or users with a specific type of disability, such as poor vision or hearing, mental impairment, or learning disabilities). Describe the differences and similarities in how you would help members of these groups search for information.

4.3 Select four different groups of library users, including one with a disability (for example, children, teens, adults, seniors, or users with a specific type of disability, such as poor vision or hearing, mental impairment, or learning disabilities). Create guides for these
groups concerning issues related to use of a social networking site, such as Facebook or Twitter.

5. **LSS demonstrate flexibility in adapting to new technology.**

Portfolio Development Suggestions

5.1 Access three library-related blogs and post comments on a topic on each blog. Describe your experience and evaluate the use of blogs in library services. Identify the pros and cons of using blogs to promote library services.

5.2 Access three library Facebook pages. Describe these pages and evaluate their use and effectiveness. Identify the pros and cons of using Facebook to promote library services.

5.3 Create a Twitter or other online social messaging account and become a follower of three library Twitter or other messaging feeds. Describe your experience and evaluate the use of the messaging method you chose in library service. Identify the pros and cons of using this social networking approach to promote library services.

6. **LSS are able to assist and train users to operate public equipment, connect to the Internet, use library software applications, and access library services from remote locations.**

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6.1 Describe the challenges and successes you have experienced in assisting and training users to operate public equipment, connect to the Internet, become comfortable using the catalog, or use other library-specific technology. How would you change and improve the way you assist or train library users?

6.2 Create a guide to help users become comfortable with a library technology service (for example, downloading e-books to a personal device, connecting to the library’s wireless network, or using the catalog).

6.3 Describe how you help a library user set up and check an e-mail account, find software to write a resume, and find job openings online.

7. **LSS know the role of technology in creating, identifying, retrieving, and accessing information resources and demonstrate facility with appropriate information discovery tools.**

Portfolio Development Suggestions

7.1 Discuss how technology impacts the creation, access, and delivery of library resources and why it is important in accessing information. Give at least three concrete examples of different technological methods and the circumstances in which they are used.
7.2 Describe how a library could use a technology to enhance or replace a face-to-face service (for example, virtual reference). Find three examples from library sites and compare and contrast their ease of use, accessibility, timeliness, and potential results for the library user.

7.3 Obtain the permission of three library users to observe their use of the library’s catalog, library databases, or Internet search engines. Solicit their challenges and successes in using these library tools. Write a report for the library detailing what you learn.

7.4 Conduct an Internet search on three topics, including at least one that might be controversial for children. Conduct one search in a children’s area that uses an Internet filter or other device for limiting access by children to the Internet. Conduct the same search in a library department primarily used by adults. Describe the search process and results, focusing on any differences in the resources retrieved.

8. **LSS perform basic troubleshooting of technical problems and resolve or refer those problems as appropriate.**

**Portfolio Development Suggestions**

8.1 Describe your challenges and successes in troubleshooting and resolving problems with computer technology, multimedia technology, and office technology. How do you decide whether to try to fix these problems yourself or to refer the problems to others?

8.2 Develop a troubleshooting checklist for basic technical problems for at least two pieces of equipment in a library. Include steps to take before asking for assistance. Share the checklist with other staff in the library and revise it based on their suggestions.

9. **LSS access and use basic assistive technologies, where appropriate, to ensure that all users have equitable access to technology.**

**Portfolio Development Suggestions**

9.1 Visit a library with assistive technology and interview library staff about the challenges and successes in helping users with assistive technologies. What insights did you gain from your experiences that you would use when helping library users with assistive technology?

9.2 Evaluate a library’s assistive technology resources and how they support the mission and goals of the library. Create a community resource guide for library users, detailing where assistive technologies are available for community members’ use.