

8Rs REDUX

CARL LIBRARIES' HUMAN RESOURCES STUDY

**Summary of Major Findings and Strategic Human Resources
Planning Implications**

for

Canadian Association of Research Libraries

by



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MARCH 2015

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL), along with the University of Alberta Libraries and the University Library at the University of Saskatchewan, for their endorsement and funding of this 8Rs Redux study.

The following individuals deserve special thanks for their assistance with reviewing the literature, survey pretesting, online technical support, data coding, editing, French translation and reviewing drafts:

Robyn Bosnyak
Kenton Good
Jeremy Hennig
Karen Hildebrandt
Wendy Matthews
Neil MacGregor
Katherine McColgan
Jill Mierke
Carmen Reems
Trish Rosseel
Pam Ryan

The study would not have been possible without the willing participation of many CARL library staff members who took the time to diligently complete lengthy and detailed surveys. We are greatly indebted to these survey respondents.

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Overall Summary Statement

Retirements, alongside the hiring of younger librarians and the restructuring of some roles and the attrition of others, have resulted in a noteworthy turnover of CARL library staff and a slightly larger and younger librarian workforce. Many librarians are learning new tasks in challenging and interesting roles that increasingly encompass specialized skills and that engender comparatively high levels of job satisfaction.

Introduction

The original 8Rs Canadian Library Human Resources Study conducted in 2003-2004 arose in response to a growing perception in the community that libraries would be facing mass retirements within the next 5 to 15 years. In contemplating the breadth of retirements and in conducting preliminary conversations with the Canadian library community, it quickly became evident that a host of other important human resources-related questions had also never been studied in Canada. The resulting report *The Future of Human Resources in Canadian Libraries* was widely disseminated. Since this was the first time that human resources issues were so thoroughly and widely examined across Canada, these data were always intended to be used as a baseline from which future research would be compared. The current collection of longitudinal data, the *8Rs Redux* for CARL Libraries has thus enabled a quantitative mapping (within a 10-year timeframe) of the many ways in which CARL libraries and their staffing requirements have changed, as well as how they have responded to changes in their operating environments. As was the case in the original 8Rs, a large portion of the findings pertain to librarians and results about paraprofessionals continue to be part of the analysis. Additionally, we conduct a more fulsome examination of *other* professionals.

As was the case for the original study, *8Rs Redux* involved the collection of a very large amount of data (more than 630 variables), and given the over-time comparisons, the analysis involved almost twice as many variables. What follows is a presentation of some of the most salient findings and their human resources planning implications. References are provided to the relevant tables and figures located in the full report. The full *8Rs Redux* report can be accessed at <http://www.ls.ualberta.ca/8rs/home.html>.

Research Methods

The research methods used in the current *Redux* study are largely a replication of those utilized in the original 8Rs study. The central components of both studies are surveys of CARL libraries (referred to as the Institutional Survey) and of CARL member library staff (referred to as the Practitioner Survey). The original Institutional Survey data represent the year 2003 and the current data 2013; however, the original Practitioner Survey was conducted in 2004 and the current survey in 2014.

Staff Characteristics

Although librarians currently comprise a slightly smaller share of CARL's professional and paraprofessional staffing complement than they did in 2003 (down from 56% to 52%; Figure 5), their overall numbers increased by 3% (Table 21). *Other* professionals now comprise a slightly larger share of all staff (up from 9% to 14%) and grew by 72% (Table 21).

Librarians are twice as likely to be members of visible minorities than 10 years ago (11% compared to 5%; Figure 8), and they continue to be predominantly female (comprising about 7 in 10 librarians; Figure 6). The gender profile of *other* professionals, however, has shifted from being predominantly female in 2003 (51%) to predominantly male in 2013 (56%).

The librarian workforce is younger now than it was in 2003 (Figure 10), due to the hiring of new and presumably younger recruits, as well as the retirement of more senior librarian staff. On average, however, all types of staff are still older than the Canadian workforce (20% of whom are over the age of 55, compared to 30% of librarians, 25% of *other* professionals, and 39% of support staff; Figure 9).

Compared to 2004, librarians, especially female librarians, are less likely to be working in middle management (down from 27% to 18%; Table 3), a finding that partly reflects the elimination of these positions as librarians retire or as their positions are not renewed due to budget restraints. Evidence to this effect is provided in Table 12 where it is noted that nearly one-third of retiring librarian positions were not replaced. Given the growth in the number of *other* professionals, and the additional finding that nearly 50% of retired librarian positions were replaced with external candidates (Table 12), it may also be possible that the reduction in middle management is partly due to a shift in some of these positions from within the ranks of librarians to within the ranks of other professionals. Since just 7% of *other* professionals were hired into restructured positions (Table 24), however, this would account for only a very small number of lost librarian middle-management positions.

In contrast, whereas in 2004 male librarians were more likely than female librarians to be working in senior administrator positions (22% compared to 12%), gender parity is now observed (15% of both male and female librarians are senior administrators; Table 3).

Strategic Human Resources Planning Implications

- The CARL workforce has become more diverse: there has been an influx of younger professionals (both librarians and *other* professionals), growth in the number of *other* professionals, and growth in the number of new staff who represent visible minorities. Care must be taken to assess the development requirements of newer staff and CARL organizational cultures and structures must be open and receptive to their presence and their needs.
- Much of the cohort of newer librarians is still clustered at a non-management career stage. Their career aspirations need to be ascertained and appropriate development and training provided as these librarians will likely continue to be the face of CARL librarianship for the next thirty to forty years.
- While middle-management positions have decreased over the last ten years, there is some indication that a greater proportion of male than female librarians has reached middle-management levels in terms of career stage. CARL institutions need to assess interest in, and potential for, performing in management and leadership roles and ensure that opportunity for advancement is provided on an equitable basis.

Organizational Context of Change

A noteworthy shift has occurred in what is perceived as the most important human resource challenge. CARL libraries now view the broader issue of dealing with the persistent pressures of workforce development rather than retirements as the most important issue requiring attention.

Retirements are just one of several sources of organizational and human resource change and they do not have nearly the same impact on how librarian roles are changing as do new technologies and new services (Table 6). It is perhaps for this reason that CARL libraries, which have already had a significant portion of their workforce leave due to retirements (Table 15), no longer view this aspect of human resources to be as critical as it once was. Though many libraries had already experienced some level of retirements by 2003, the community concern at that time over the prospect of a swell of retirements perhaps surpassed the actual experience of retirements that has occurred in the past 10 years. Having already dealt with a degree of retirements while concurrently managing numerous other human resource challenges resulted in the relegation of retirements down the list of competing concerns. Thus, it is not that having to deal with retirements is no longer an issue for CARL libraries, but only that it is no longer the primary issue of concern.

Several indicators suggest that budgets are playing an increasingly limiting role in achieving the most pressing human resources issue of developing a skilled workforce. Not only are budgets considered to be a barrier to change by the vast majority of libraries (91%; Table

7), but they are increasingly viewed as a barrier to recruitment (up from 64% to 77%; Table 9) and to providing promotional opportunities to librarians (up from 56% to 79%).

Strategic Human Resources Planning Implications

- CARL libraries have experienced sustained organizational change and this is most likely to continue given declining or stagnant budgets, new technologies and capacities, and the overall changing environment of postsecondary education. Somewhat paradoxically, strategies for dealing with, or capitalizing on, the challenge of developing a skilled workforce under these changing conditions have remained relatively constant over the past 10 years (Table 5). Some barriers, such as budgets or collective agreements, may prove intractable or difficult to change over the next 10 years, but barriers such as organizational culture and employee resistance to change can be addressed when organizations endeavor to work with staff on these issues. The literature on organizational change and development provides evidence that principles of organizational development (OD) can be used within higher education to address the underlying causes of organizational problems while still maintaining commitment to academic excellence. For a case study and one such example, see Ruben, 2005.

Recruitment

The majority of libraries have a good or excellent ability to recruit, roughly the same as in 2003 (Table 8). Reduced ability to recruit, such that it exists, is primarily due to budgets (Table 9). Indicators also suggest that, from the supply side perspective, the job market for recent MLIS graduates does not significantly depart from that of the 2004 recent graduates (Figure 16). In broad terms, therefore, recruitment of librarians appears to be supporting the development of a skilled and flexible workforce. Chapter 8 examines the extent to which supply meets the demand for specific competencies through recruitment.

Strategic Human Resources Planning Implications

- As in 2004, CARL libraries are not experiencing much difficulty in recruiting qualified applicants, with budgets serving as a key limiting factor in recruitment. However, given limited budget resources, deciding which positions to recruit into and whether these positions are best filled by librarians, *other* professionals, or support staff, will continue to be major questions in CARL recruitment. The necessity for clear definitions of roles and responsibilities and for understanding the emerging needs of CARL library organizations will also persist and remain a focus of recruitment activity.
- Observable gains in staffing diversity have been made by CARL libraries, particularly in employment of staff who are visible minorities. However, attention cannot be diverted away from increasing the diversity of the CARL workforce and equity plans continue to be important. Some CARL employers have instituted scholarships and internships for aboriginal students; these are a progressive and enlightened response to increasing the

number of aboriginal candidates for library positions. Equal attention should be paid to disabled individuals who are qualified and available for work. The increasing prevalence of on-line education options in Canadian MLIS and other post-secondary programs may also help to strengthen the numbers of applicants identified in Canada's employment equity legislation and enlarging the pools of candidates for jobs in CARL libraries.

Retirement

There are minor differences between the future retirement rates of librarians, *other* professionals, and paraprofessionals. This finding does not change the dominant story that despite a lack of formal succession planning (Table 18), CARL libraries have been dealing with retirements somewhat successfully in the past decade (Tables 13 and 14) and there is no reason to believe that they won't continue to do so in the future. At the same time, CARL libraries are well advised to consider the compound effects from the retirement of both professionals and paraprofessionals on the competency supply of their workforce, and the repercussions on the community's leadership from the departure of senior administrators, the largest group of departing librarians.

Overall, the study revealed that retirements are not inherently problematic and, in fact, are not a problem for the majority of CARL libraries since librarians do not appear to be (Table 11) and are not predicted to be (Table 16) retiring at alarming rates. As the typical age of retirement increases, the likelihood of having to deal with sudden peaks in retirements decreases. As well, some vacated positions have been restructured into introductory positions, giving the library an opportunity to inject newer and younger talent into their workforce. Even if retired positions are not restructured, replacement from outside the library can be an opportunity to effectively manage instances of resistance to change (Table 7). Retirement of librarians appears to be more of a problem when it involves replacing the knowledge and skills associated with managerial and leadership competencies held by senior administrative positions (Table 13). Such skill shortages are especially of concern given the higher predicted retirement rates among middle management and senior administrators (Table 17).

The question is not if retirements are a problem, therefore, but under what circumstances they are a problem. The absence of formal succession-planning strategies (Table 18) specifically designed to target and groom upcoming managers and leaders is one such circumstance that warrants attention among CARL libraries. In addition further investigation into proven and viable succession planning practices for senior administrative positions should be considered.

Lastly, the youthful profile of CARL librarians not only signals a healthy rate of hiring, but since this hiring coincided with a shift in librarian skill demand it must also indicate that the community has already been capitalizing on the opportunity that retirements bring. In other words, to some extent retirements have allowed the CARL community to address the most

pressing human resources issue of developing a workforce that possesses high demand skills.

Strategic Human Resources Planning Implications

- Retirements have occurred gradually within the CARL population and to a large extent retirements have fuelled the recruitment of a new generation of the CARL library workforce. Retirements are predicted to continue at a similar pace to that experienced over the past decade and will continue to offer opportunity for renewal.
- As post-MLIS leadership and management training is deemed inadequate to replace competencies lost by retiring librarians (Table 14), CARL organizations must more closely define what this means and how to fill the vacuum left by retiring librarians. Entry-level to senior leadership institutes are more commonly offered in the USA and Canadian librarians can take advantage of them; however, it may also be timely to open a discussion of what CARL as a collective might do to enhance leadership and management competencies in the younger cohorts of CARL librarians.
- Is succession planning a viable human resources planning mechanism for CARL libraries? While formally practiced by a few, it does not seem to be a primary mechanism for replacing the management and leadership skills of senior retirees. However, as CARL libraries are practicing many elements of succession planning, it may be more feasible for libraries to examine these practices (Table 18) and to invest in or develop practices around the elements that work for their particular circumstances. This may be especially important for practices that focus on the succession of management and leadership competencies.
- The younger age profile of CARL librarians has implications for developing human resource management strategies that might be better aligned with the wants, needs, and sensibilities of younger populations. It is becoming a truism that younger workers seek more balanced and meaningful work than they may have observed in their parents' generation, but this premise should be more closely scrutinized along with greater understanding of what this means within library organizations. Recent Canadian research has found, in fact, that the reverse is true with respect to meaningful work and that generation Y and baby boomers are more alike in their work values than they are different (Lowe, 2014). This may also be important as collective agreements are renegotiated for a younger population of workers.

Professional and Paraprofessional Population and Role Change

Since the total number of CARL employees decreased by 7% and all professional and paraprofessional staff increased by 11% (Table 21), we can deduce that the total population decline in the past 10 years was due to reductions in non-paraprofessional support staff.

Other professionals increased at the greatest rate, but by only 6 percentage points as a proportion of all staff, and increases did not occur at all libraries. Increases in the population of *other* professionals were found to be a result of creating new positions much more so than they were from restructuring existing positions (57% compared to 7%; Table 24). As might be expected, many of these new positions were in IT, but the data show that *other* professionals are performing a wide range of roles in CARL libraries among which IT, communications, and copyright professionals are growing the most noticeably (Table 26). More importantly, many of these new *other* professional positions have similar titles to newly-created librarian positions (Appendix Table 5). The conclusion is that while librarians continue to predominantly hold jobs in public services, and *other* professionals dominate IT jobs, these two professional staff groups are increasingly fulfilling many of the same functional needs of CARL libraries, needs which progressively require specialized skills (Table 30).

The results suggest also suggest that the expansion of non-MLIS professionals is a small trend in CARL libraries, but one that will likely continue. Given the wide range of roles played by *other* professionals and given that the reasons for hiring *other* professionals rests upon a similarly wide range of causes, predictions about their future rate of growth are beyond the scope of the *8Rs Redux* data, but should continue to be followed.

It is not within the scope of this report to weigh in on whether the increase in *other* professionals is a positive or negative change; however, to the extent that the increase is in response to emerging needs of the library that might otherwise be left unfilled, one must conclude that the influx is filling a functional role. Wilder (2007b) aptly captures the benefits and challenges associated with this trend in the following quote:

[T]he nature of scholarship and higher education has changed in ways that present academic libraries with challenges that did not exist 20 years ago and libraries deserve credit for finding the creativity and resources to meet those challenges quickly and effectively . . . [Yet, he adds] As the size and influence of the non-traditional professionals grow . . . administrators would do well to think about the traditional expertise in their ranks--expertise that, in many respects, responds to timeless values that lie at the heart of our profession. (p5)

The evidence of a continued shift in paraprofessionals performing librarian roles is also not strong (Table 29), despite that the vast majority of institutional respondents indicated that role shift had occurred and would continue to occur (Table 28). Indeed, the stability in tasks across time for both librarians and paraprofessionals is somewhat unexpected and suggests that perhaps the bulk of the change resulting from new technology occurred before 2004. Alternatively, the inability to detect change may be a function of the level of detail in the description of the tasks themselves. Thus, though the same proportion of librarians in 2003 and 2013 are performing reference, information services, and research support to faculty and students (66%; Table 29), the ways in which these tasks are being performed has changed. To the extent that new technologies are informing nearly everything that is done

in the library, change is thus best measured in terms of "how" and not "what." CARL itself notes that

"The essential role of the CARL librarian has not changed. Regardless of his or her specific position, the librarian's central mandate continues to be bringing information seekers and information sources together." (Core Competencies of the 21st Century: CARL librarians, p4).

The stability of over-time findings presented in Table 29 thus serves as a reminder that while there are new ways of doing the same thing and, even though the scholarly environment for doing so has changed dramatically, the core role of librarians remains unchanged, as does that of their paraprofessional counterparts.

Strategic Human Resources Planning Implications

- The composition of the CARL workforce should continue to be monitored as there is evidence of shifts in numbers of librarians, *other* professionals, and support staff, and some continuing evidence of role change, without a clear picture of whether these are significant or long term trends.
- The numbers of support staff in CARL libraries has decreased and this trend is likely to continue as support staff retire and are not replaced. As a result, the role of support staff needs to be examined within CARL libraries and their support skills and competencies assessed and defined for the future.
- Paraprofessionals continue to provide a valuable role in CARL libraries and there continues to be a fair degree of role overlap with librarian colleagues. CARL libraries should continue to assess the needs of the organization and level of job responsibility with the object of creating or re-aligning positions that are challenging for paraprofessionals and professionals alike and acknowledge their distinct but complementary skills sets.
- There do not seem to be highly differentiated roles for *other* professionals in CARL libraries; they perform a broad range of roles and functions, and as noted, the numbers of *other* professionals continues to increase in almost all of the identified job classifications. It may be that *other* professionals provide specialized or emergent skill sets throughout these broad classifications; however, new librarian positions and new *other* professional positions both exhibit a large amount of overlap. Further work should be done to understand emerging roles in CARL libraries and the ideal educational background in recruitment.

Librarian Competencies and Competency Change

On the whole, CARL librarians are expected to possess a wide cross-section of both soft and hard skills (Table 30), most of which are not difficult to find in the pools of candidates

applying for librarian positions (Table 31). With respect to the former, CARL recruiters are finding it much less difficult than they did in 2004 to find candidates with the ability to flexibly adapt to change and who are also innovative, both of which are soft competencies that have been said to characterize the 21st-Century Librarian. This change thus marks a considerable shift in the supply of competencies brought to the workplace by librarians.

Otherwise, of all the changes presented in this chapter, the increased need for librarians to perform a wide array of typically high-tech and specialist roles is perhaps the most indicative of what the 21st-Century librarian looks like. If the skill sets required to perform roles such as bibliometrics, e-learning, digitization, and GIS are not typically acquired in library schools, the onus is placed primarily on the library itself to ensure staff are adequately trained. The intersection of the demand for specialized and IT skills demonstrates the importance of on-the-job training, a challenge that CARL libraries have been largely meeting with success. Of all the competencies examined, librarians are most likely to be interested in practicing IT skills, as well as most likely to be interested in and to have participated in IT training (Tables 32 and 33). Effective IT training that has been provided to librarians, combined with the fact that IT has now been part of the academic library for nearly two decades, seems to have increased IT skill sets to the extent that senior librarians are now just as likely as recent graduates to show interest in using (Table 32) and furthering their IT skills (Tables 33).

In fact, the results overall have demonstrated the importance of ongoing training for the development of a skilled workforce, not just for IT or for specialist roles, but also for conducting research and for performing leadership, managerial, and business roles. On-the-job training is especially required for inculcating the talents and sensibilities typical of performing leadership roles insofar as they are arguably difficult to teach in the classroom setting of the library school. Though there is evidence to suggest that there is still room for library schools to enhance curriculum dedicated to management and research skills (Table 38), the gap between librarian interest in continuing their education in these competencies and their participation in such education (Table 37) also suggests there is room to enhance the opportunities and organizational support for such on-the-job training. These findings should be interpreted within the context of an overall improved match between the demand for and supply of leadership and management skills since 2004 (Tables 30 and 31).

Strategic Human Resources Planning Implications

- Competencies continue to change within CARL libraries. Both library schools and library organizations have a role to play in defining the changing knowledge base for the profession as well as ensuring that needed skills are developed or re-developed in the light of emerging needs. On-going discussions with library schools and participation on school advisory committees and with ALA accreditation committees, will help ensure that CARL libraries and schools maintain a common understanding of the changing

competencies for research libraries.

- The importance of specialized skill sets within CARL libraries is clearly indicated by institutional respondents, with libraries reporting needs over a broad spectrum, and many but not all libraries experiencing difficulty filling these needs through recruitment. CARL libraries thus need to assess their current and on-going training initiatives in light of the demand for specialized skill sets and on-going needs for leadership, management and research skills.
- The need for a wide range of specialist skills across almost all CARL libraries, should also provide the catalyst for focused discussions on the ways in which CARL libraries might share expertise and encourage those in specialist roles to train and mentor others across the breadth of CARL libraries. Collaborative and peer-led initiatives, such as the CARL Research Institute, should also be encouraged among CARL libraries. Given the cost of travel for on-site training, alternative delivery mechanisms, such as Webinars or access to live events via video, should also be considered.

Education and Training

When comparing changes in the three possible routes that CARL staff can acquire the skills and abilities needed for them to effectively perform their jobs in the 21st-Century research library (formal education, training, experiential learning), most noticeable is the increase that has occurred in their formal education. With 37% of 2014 librarians having earned two graduate degrees and 3% earning three graduate degrees (compared to 28% and 1%, respectively, in 2004) and 71% of 2014 paraprofessionals earning an undergraduate or graduate degree (compared to 60% in 2004), it is clear that CARL library staff are making an important contribution to their development (Table 44).

Recent ratings by graduates of how well MLIS programs provide generalist skills are favourable, and their evaluations of the individual competencies learnt in the program have increased between 2004 and 2014. Hovering around 50%, however, their overall evaluation of the quality of education is the same as it was in 2004 (Table 46). Though we have seen slight improvements in the evaluation of management, leadership, and business skills taught in MLIS programs, a good share of both recent graduates (22%; Table 47) and institutional representatives (35%; results not presented in table or figure) targeted these skills as areas that need improvement. Of even greater importance to recent graduates, however, is the need to link MLIS programs more closely to the practice (Table 47). This finding could explain the consistency in overall ratings of MLIS programs, especially given that just 37% of recent graduates agreed that the program provided them with a realistic depiction of what it is like to work as an academic librarian. Presumably, a "realistic depiction" is more readily conveyed experientially than in the classroom. The interest in learning about the profession from a firsthand perspective is understandable, but it highlights the tension between maintaining librarianship as a profession while at the same

time ensuring that the two years in graduate school adequately prepare students for the academic library labour market.

Ten years have elapsed since the 8Rs first revealed that libraries need their staff to receive more education in management, business, and leadership; and almost as much time has passed since the 8Rs Training Gaps Analysis made the explicit recommendation for library schools to increase their curriculum content in management and leadership. The results of the *8Rs Redux* suggest that, though respondents see improvement, library schools still need to examine more fully this documented need. A more definitive conclusion would entail a closer examination of library school curricula changes over the past decade; however, the conclusions of the 8Rs Training Gaps Analysis conducted in 2006 revealed that most deans and directors of Canadian library schools recognized the importance of managerial and leadership skills to libraries, though there were diverging opinions about the appropriateness of inculcating management and especially leadership skills in the classroom. Current debate continues to focus upon whether leadership skills are appropriately taught in library school programs or left to the workplace (Phillips, 2014).

Training is not just about equipping staff with the skills and abilities needed for their current positions, but it is also about preparing them for changes in their current position and for more responsible, higher level, or simply different positions. The finding that 1 in 5 librarians and paraprofessionals do not feel adequately equipped to perform their job effectively (Table 50), combined with the fact that a larger proportion of staff are interested in engaging in training than have actually done so (Table 51), suggests that while training is adequate for some staff, important training gaps are evident for others. It thus behooves CARL libraries to better assess the training needs of their staff on a continuing basis. As it stands, while performance evaluations are conducted in about 70% of libraries, just 2 in 5 reported that they routinely assess the training needs of their librarians, and even fewer (9%) evaluate the effectiveness of such training. At the same time, 86% of institutional respondents reported that their library promotes a culture of lifelong learning.

Strategic Human Resources Planning Implications

- Understanding that roles in Canadian research libraries are changing and will continue to evolve, and that library organizations will continue to define competencies associated with new and changing roles, education and training of all library staff will continue to be critical determinants in the success of CARL libraries as they support change and adaptation as well as learning and growth. Recruitment can also provide for new roles and identified competencies, but this is not always possible given the budget picture facing many CARL Libraries. As recommended in 2004, both practitioners and institutions must commit to education and training as an ongoing necessity.
- CARL libraries must also develop mechanisms to assess the on-going training and development needs of their library staff on a continuing basis. Admittedly, this is not an

easy task as these needs are variable across individuals and can be different depending upon career stage. Training and development needs must also be assessed in light of the needs of the entire organization. This raises two burning questions: How do practitioner interests and needs align with the interests and needs of the organization? And, where should practitioners and institutions spend their often scant resources of time and money? CARL libraries must clearly communicate their directions and set training and development agendas congruent with these directions. Training and development programs must also be evaluated to see if they are indeed effectively addressing staff and organizational needs.

- There is a seeming lack of congruence between the institutional perspective that many training opportunities are available and the perspective of practitioners that there are gaps between their interest in specific types of training and whether they have had the opportunity to participate in such training (especially for leadership development and research skills training, but not for IT skills). Perhaps at least a partial answer lies in advising libraries to be very clear about the connection between needed competencies and the training and development programs that are being offered. If there are staff interests that will not be met because of other institutional priorities for training and development, staff can then elect to fulfill their interests through outside training opportunities. Of course, libraries will also want to pay close attention to staff interests, as these may be driven by emerging needs that are not necessarily easily or readily identified as an institutional priority.

Quality of Work Life and Job Satisfaction

Overall, the findings suggest that most aspects of work that are important to staff and that contribute to their job satisfaction are adequately provided. Not only are the majority of librarians, *other* professionals, and paraprofessionals satisfied (Table 52), but they are in agreement about liking the challenging, interesting, creative, varied, public service, autonomous and respectful relationship aspects of their jobs (Figure 26). It has also been found that, although staff are not as interested in promotion as they are in growth and skill development (Table 53), the opportunities for career advancement are more limited and may therefore influence interest (Table 57). Furthermore, budget restrictions appear to be a more limiting factor for promotional opportunities than they are for training to enhance skills (Table 56).

The chapter findings add to an accumulating body of evidence suggesting that professional and paraprofessional staff are rising to the challenge, or at the very least are interested in rising to the challenge of finding new, better, or more creative ways of accomplishing the same tasks or new tasks. Many practitioners wrote about this very challenge when describing the job aspects they most liked (Figure 26). By way of illustration, below is a very small sample of such sentiments expressed by librarians:

We are working in a time of transformational change and it is challenging, exciting, and rewarding to be leading the change process.

The variety of work, the international scope and ability to participate and lead the use of technologies in an academic setting.

The challenge of designing new systems and solving old problems. Always learning new technical skills and being able to apply my design talents without too much committee oversight. Knowing that my work is used by a lot of users.

Very dynamic and changing; new perspectives on the profession and practice demonstrated by new librarians who interpret their roles broadly; enjoy complexity of the changing roles of librarians (ambiguity and all!).

The diversity of activities, the range of opportunities, working in a changing field in the vanguard of new librarianship, and my awesome colleagues.

Having said this, not all types of staff are equally satisfied, nor do all jobs involve the same aspects that are important and that impact job satisfaction.

Paraprofessionals, in particular, warrant a more fulsome summary of their results. To begin, as was the case in 2004, paraprofessionals are slightly less satisfied with their jobs overall than librarians and *other* professionals (76% satisfied compared to 80% of librarians and 88% of *other* professionals; Table 52). While growth and skill development are just as important determinants of job satisfaction for paraprofessionals as they are for professionals (Table 69), they are less likely to be working in jobs with such opportunities, and they are twice as likely to report disliking the routine and repetitive aspects of their jobs that represent skill underutilization (Figure 27). Indeed, some of the job elements that are especially important to paraprofessionals are, coincidentally, the least likely to be part of their jobs. For example, paraprofessionals are generally more concerned with their job security, yet they are the least likely to be working in a job that they are certain will continue (53% compared to 64% of librarians and 65% of *other* professionals). Alternatively, paraprofessional staff are the most likely to be working in jobs that allow them to achieve work-life balance (Table 59), and they are also the most likely to view this element of work as important. Paraprofessionals are, moreover, the most likely to indicate that they have manageable workloads (68% compared to 45% of librarians and 52% of *other* professionals; Table 59). In contrast, the more challenging and varied nature of librarian jobs appear to come with the price of lower levels of workload manageability and work-life balance. Of final note, are the lower levels of career advancement and decision-making opportunities afforded to paraprofessionals (Table 64).

In addition to being slightly more concerned about the erosion of librarianship as a profession (Table 70), mid-career librarians were found to also be slightly less satisfied with their jobs overall than they were in 2004 (from 83% down to 78%; Table 52). While a causal analysis is beyond the scope of this project, we can speculate that part of the reason for the decrease in satisfaction is due to the findings that mid-career librarians report that they are also more likely to now perform more routine work than they were 5 years ago

(from 18% up to 25%; Table 60); and that compared to 2004, they are less likely to report that they are treated with respect by their superiors (from 77% down to 69%) and that they have good relationships with administration (from 76% down to 63%)(Table 65).

Strategic Human Resources Planning Implications

- CARL libraries are at an important juncture in their evolution. The changing post-secondary environment of research, teaching, and scholarly communication and dissemination is triggering the development of new roles for staff, and therefore, opportunities to work and contribute in ways that many staff view as exciting, challenging, and satisfying. The challenge for CARL institutions will be to manage these changes in ways that allow staff to maintain their high rates of job satisfaction and also to ameliorate the aspects of organizational life that lead to dissatisfaction and reluctance to change. Continuous attention should be paid to employee engagement and the various indicators of job satisfaction that may influence engagement.
- Mid-career librarians are the least likely to report that their accomplishments are recognized and that their jobs are more rewarding and enjoyable compared to 5 years ago. It would be useful to consider these findings within individual organizational contexts. Many mid-career librarians should be considering senior leadership positions within CARL libraries. Given that retention rates suggest they will work within their organizations for another few decades, their engagement and participation is crucial to the continuing success of CARL libraries.
- The importance of good and respectful workplace relationships is apparent and is common among all staff groups within CARL libraries. Strategies for reinforcing or growing the strength of these relationships should continue to be at the fore of all CARL workforce planning.