Information Literacy and the Workforce

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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.

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.

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 infolit 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

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

Casner-Lotto, 2009
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

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;
Conclusion

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

*The challenge is to bring it to the workplace*

Goad, 2002
References


References


References

