

Restructuring and rewarding with competence

Future challenge, future change: the national library competencies conference, 4-5 December 1995

Restructuring the workplace is another consequence of the development of national benchmarks for work practice in the information industry. The *Future challenge, future change* national conference on library competencies, to be held in December, will provide a number of practical workplace experiences of award restructuring and enterprise agreements.

The practitioners

Vicki Williamson, from the university library at Curtin University of Technology, will outline the workplace experiences of library staff in Perth. Vicki will describe the inception of a *General staff award restructuring and enterprise agreement* in November 1992 and how staff have embarked on a series of significant industrial and workplace changes, for example the establishment of a consultative committee process, the development of enterprise-specific competencies and their alignment with regard to industry standards, and the establishment of review and reward schemes which are unique to the academic sector.

Angela Bridgeland, director, management services at the University of Melbourne library, will report on the working party of staff at different supervisory levels and locations to examine uses of competency standards in human resource management practices. The areas include training gap analysis, analysis of competencies or potential formulation of performance indicators for position descriptions, framing of selection criteria for recruitment and the identification of areas where local enterprise competency standards need to be developed to support or supplement national industry standards.

David Haynes, federal industrial officer, Community and Public Sector Union, will provide an insight into the bargaining process and problems that need to be averted to successfully introduce such dynamic and evolving foundations as the library competency

standards. Industrial problems may emerge when the standards are applied as an element in classification structures, job redesign, work reorganisation and performance appraisal. David suggests the standards must be introduced cooperatively with incentives appropriate to the introduction of all change problems, along with ongoing training about the processes to allow staff workplace commitment to them.

Kay Poustie, chairperson of ALIA's Board of Education will address some of the continuing professional development issues which have been high on the Association's agenda over the past two years. Kay will report on what ALIA is doing to assist library and information sector workers to upgrade their competencies and the role it will play in facilitating continuing professional development in the changing work environment.

Jenn Evans, former director, Freelance Library and Information Services, will examine the role of employers and educational institutions to provide greater equality of opportunity for library and information workers, particularly the inexperienced newly qualified, part-time and casual employees and those returning to the workplace to acquire or regain the necessary competencies to compete for available positions. Jenn will also identify the needs of staff to get the opportunity to practice and the need for suitable mentors, in-service training courses and assessment for members or staff to successfully re-enter and perform in the workforce.

Remember to keep your diaries free for the first week in December in Melbourne. Be entertained, challenged and informed by this national conference. For more information and a conference application ring or fax the conference organisers, Waldron and Smith Conference and Associates Management, phone (03) 9670 6744, fax (03) 9690 7155.

Ian Rogers, conference organising committee of ELISS

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