

Educating Knowledge Professionals in Library and Information Science Schools

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Abstract

Knowledge management (KM) is a multidisciplinary subject which involves efforts from professionals with diverse backgrounds. This paper aims to investigate the needed educational background and skills for knowledge management professionals. In particular, the focus of the paper is to examine whether a master's degree in library and information science (LIS) is a preferred educational background listed in KM-related job postings. In addition, the preferred skills and knowledge required by KM employers are analyzed to reveal the association with graduate courses in library and information science. Job postings were collected from various sources during a specific timeframe. Content analysis was used to discover the kinds of backgrounds, skills, and knowledge that are expected from the employers. By examining both KM literature and the job postings, it is agreed that a certain set of skills can be taught and essential knowledge can be obtained through the LIS curriculum.

Keywords: Knowledge management; Knowledge professional; Knowledge manager; Job posting; Master degree; MLIS; Information specialist

The Problem and Its Setting

Statement of the problem

In recent years knowledge management has gained more attention than ever (Chen, 1998). The root of knowledge management (KM) can be traced back to the mid 1990's (Koenig, 1999, p. 17). Despite the fact that knowledge management is not a newly invented concept, its practices became feasible because of the advances of information technologies. It is also because of the rethinking and reapplication of KM in business organization that KM gains its popularity and plays an important role in organizations, particularly those that are knowledge intensive, such as high technology, management consultancies, pharmaceutical companies, and financial services (Chen, 1998, p.20). It is therefore essential that we, as professionals in the field of library and information science (LIS), start to think about how we can prepare future graduates to enter the job market of knowledge management.

Hypothesis and research questions

The focus of this study is centered on the assumption and hypothesis that a master's