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An analysis of entry-level librarian ads published in American Libraries, 1982-2002.

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David Ratledge

Much discussion has taken place in the literature over the difficulty finding qualified candidates to fill vacancies within libraries. Emphasis has been placed on recruitment, internships, scholarships, and other partnerships by library science schools and libraries to attract new people to the profession. Even so, applicant pools are dwindling [Simmons-Welburn and McNeil, 2004] and many institutions have been forced to rewrite job ads after initial postings to locate a qualified candidate. Factors hindering vacancy searches include:

- Graying of the profession, “Thousands of librarians will be retiring in the next ten years” [Simmons-Welburn and McNeil, 2004]
- Budget constraints/less positions [Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2004]
- Low pay in comparison to other professions [Congress on Professional Education, 1999]
- Less people entering the profession [Kaufman, 2002]

Since more and more experienced candidates are retiring, frequently recruitment must turn towards entry-level candidates. This paper takes a look at the minimum requirements acceptable to employers to hire a candidate with no professional experience.

A review of the literature reveals no specific focus on entry-level position requirements. There have been several studies analyzing position announcements for content. These studies focused on different specializations within the library field or a thorough examination of a particular year. Although some studies have included entry-level librarians, none examined these trends for changes in entry-level requirements over time.

This paper attempts to answer some of the questions about trends with entry-level positions, such as:

- What are the minimum requirements acceptable for an entry-level position?
- Have these requirements become more stringent or lax over time?
- What types of librarianship offer the most entry-level positions?
- Are there substantial differences in the requirements for reference, technical services, and systems librarian entry-level positions?
- Are there substantial differences in salaries between the three types of positions?
- What impact has technology had on the requirements for entry-level jobs?

This study should pinpoint what experience and knowledge are required of new graduates once they enter the profession and benefit institutions seeking to fill vacancies.

Literature Review

While there have been several studies over time analyzing job ads for various trends in the profession, the status of entry-level positions over time has not been addressed. A few studies have mentioned entry-level positions in their findings.

- Chaudhry and Komathi examined cataloging positions in the 1990s and found that the differences in requirements for tech services entry-level jobs and experienced librarian positions had lessened over time, indicating “requirements for entry-level jobs had increased.” [Chaudhry and Komathi, 2001]. They also found that entry-level catalogers should already be highly trained in the field before beginning a professional position [Chaudhry and Komathi, 2001].
- Reser and Schuneman analyzed public service and technical services job ads in 1988. They developed a strict view of an entry-level job. The position either stated no work experience required or was necessary; or the ads labeled the position as entry-level. [Reser and Schuneman, 1992]. They found few entry-level jobs in their analysis, which they contributed to “institutions being reluctant to advertise nationally for entry-level positions.” [Reser and Schuneman, 1992]. They also maintained that a cataloger requires more training than a public services position, therefore there are less entry-level technical services positions [Reser and Schuneman, 1992].
- Beile and Adams updated the Reser and Schuneman study in 1996. They found an overall decrease in the number of ads posted and used the same criteria for determining if a job was entry-level. They found that salary ranges for ads entry-level jobs and ads preferring experience only had slight salary differences. [Beile and Adams, 2000].

- In 1980, Creth and Harders mailed surveys to ARL personnel officers to determine the requirements for entry-level librarians. They found most positions required previous work experience in an academic library and that library schools should put stronger emphasis on gaining work experience outside library school.

Methodology

Entry-level librarian position vacancy announcements in academic libraries were analyzed over a twenty-year period at five-year intervals beginning in 1982 to determine how requirements for experience and knowledge have changed over time. It was decided job ad listings would paint a solid picture of what skills an entry-level applicant would need to secure a professional position.

The hypotheses are:

1. Over time, employers require more experience and knowledge that cannot always be gained from library school.
2. On the job experience before obtaining a professional degree is almost mandatory.
3. The number of entry-level jobs is decreasing.

One thousand four hundred forty-one ads were analyzed in *American Libraries* between 1982 and 2002 and the data was entered into a spreadsheet. Duplicate ads were removed (Ads appearing in more than one issue). Also not included were temporary positions, foreign positions, part-time positions, and community college listings. Ads were divided into three categories: Systems, Reference, and Technical Services. The designation was based on majority of time spent in a particular area. An ad was designated as systems if a majority of the candidate's time was devoted to the administration of an actual computer network. Technical services ads included primary duties such as cataloging, acquisitions, and circulation away from public services. Reference positions primarily dealt with public services, such as desk duties and bibliographic instruction. Collection development positions were decided on a case-by-case basis, depending on if the majority of time was spent in public or technical services.

Reser and Schuneman determined an ad was entry-level if it "(1) had no work experience mentioned in the advertisement; (2) had a statement specifying that no experience was necessary; or (3) were labeled "entry level" [Reser and Schuneman, 1992]. This study's definition of an "entry-level" position was less stringent than Reser and Schuneman's definition. For this study, an ad was determined to be entry-level if it met any of the following criteria:

1. Ad says “entry-level.”
2. No mention of required professional experience.
3. No experience or duties impossible for entry-level librarians to gain (i.e. Supervising other professionals, administrative experience, substantial progressively responsible experience.)

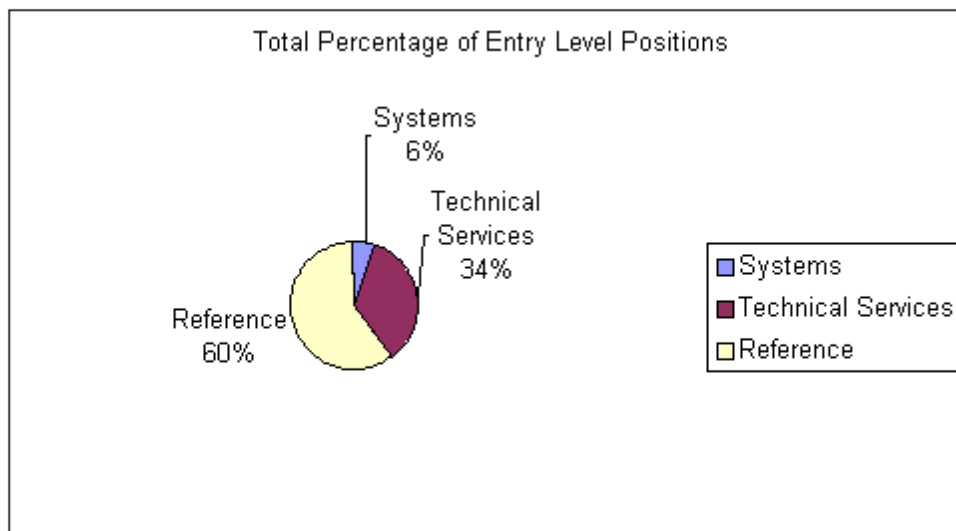
The definition was expanded to determine the minimum qualifications a candidate would need to enter the field without professional experience. Reser and Schuneman’s definition did not allow for paraprofessional work experience, but the revised definition takes pre-professional experience into consideration.

Advertisements meeting the criteria for entry-level were examined only for required qualifications (not preferred) to determine the minimum knowledge and experience acceptable for the position. Each of an ad’s required qualifications was placed in one of the following categories: required education, required experience, required knowledge, and required personal attributes. The ads were then analyzed for trends and patterns. A chi-square test was performed on the technical services and reference tables to check for statistical significance. There was not enough data to perform chi-square for systems positions.

The Findings

Number of Positions

Figure A



The findings indicated that systems positions remained a small portion of the overall ads, peaking in 1997 with 8% of the positions. Overall percentages of technical services positions decreased from a high of 41% of total positions in 1982 to only 27% of the

positions in 1997. After peaking with 37% in 1987, the percentage of entry-level technical services jobs declined to only 25% in 1997. Reference has always had the largest percentage of total ads, and has been on a steady increase with 64% of entry-level jobs being reference in 2002, although the total percentage of reference positions has remained relatively steady throughout the study. Additionally, California, New York, and Texas posted the most positions with 110, 102, and 82 respectively. Hawaii listed no positions and Delaware and Wyoming only had one position each.

Total Ad Count

Total positions: 2613	Total Entry level: 1441 [55%]
% Systems: 4	% Entry-level Systems: 6
% Technical Services: 33	% Entry-level Technical Services: 34
% Reference: 51	% Entry-level Reference: 60
% Administrative: 12	[Figure A]

1982

Total positions: 421	Total Entry level: 231 [55%]
% Systems: 2	% Entry-level Systems: 1
% Technical Services: 41	% Entry-level Technical Services: 39
% Reference: 47	% Entry-level Reference: 61
% Administrative: 10	

1987

Total positions: 774	Total Entry level: 452 [59%]
% Systems: 5	% Entry-level Systems: 5
% Technical Services: 37	% Entry-level Technical Services: 39
% Reference: 49	% Entry-level Reference: 55
% Administrative: 9	

1992

Total positions: 517	Total Entry level: 266 [51%]
% Systems: 4	% Entry-level Systems: 6
% Technical Services: 30	% Entry-level Technical Services: 31
% Reference: 55	% Entry-level Reference: 62
% Administrative: 11	

1997

Total positions: 492 Total Entry level: 284 [58%]
% Systems: 8 % Entry-level Systems: 6
% Technical Services: 27 % Entry-level Technical Services: 25
% Reference: 51 % Entry-level Reference: 65
% Administrative: 15

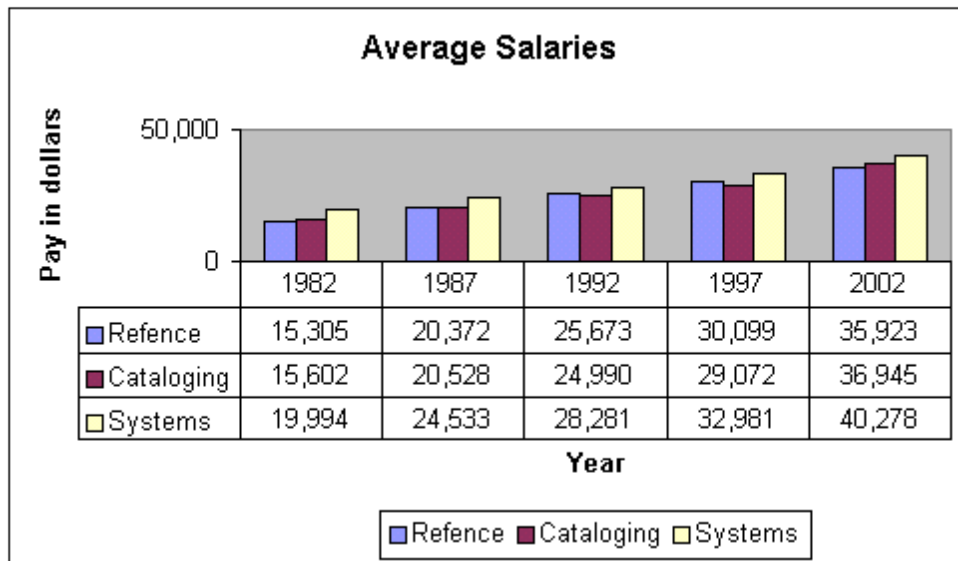
2002

Total positions: 409 Total Entry level: 208 [51%]
% Systems: 3 % Entry-level Systems: 6
% Technical Services: 30 % Entry-level Technical Services: 29
% Reference: 52 % Entry-level Reference: 64
% Administrative: 16

Salary

When computing average salaries, systems librarians consistently averaged higher salaries than either reference or cataloging librarians. Systems librarians have also seen the biggest increase in average salaries. Reference librarians made less than technical services librarians except in 1997 when they averaged slightly higher [Figure B]. Overall, systems positions were paid an average of 7% higher than either reference or technical services.

Figure B



Education

Minimum educational requirements for each position were examined and divided into nine categories:

- ALA accredited MLS
- MLS without mention of accreditation
- Degree equivalent to an MLS
- Degree other than an MLS
- Degree in addition to an MLS
- Prefer an MLS
- Work experience in lieu of a degree
- No education requirement listed
- Coursework in place of a degree.

Systems librarian positions were the least likely to require an ALA-MLS with only 75% of positions requiring one. A non-accredited MLS was more accepted in the past, with no systems ads allowing one in either 1997 or 2002. Not much interest has been shown in equivalent degrees with only two ads listing them as acceptable. A degree other than the MLS has become more accepted with 31% of the positions accepting one in 1997 and 15% in 2002. Only two ads asked for a degree in addition to the MLS and no ads listed the MLS as preferred. Experience in lieu of a degree was listed in four ads and five ads did not mention an education requirement. By 2002, systems positions began to place a larger emphasis on coursework with 15% of positions requiring it [Figure C].

Figure C
Systems - Education

	1982	%	1987	%	1992	%	1997	%	2002	%
ALA-MLS	1	50	20	83	14	82	20	77	11	82
MLS	1	50	2	8	2	12	0	0	0	0
Equivalent Degree	0	0	2	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
Degree other than MLS	0	0	2	8	0	0	8	31	2	15
Degree in addition to MLS	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	1	8
MLS Preferred	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Experience in lieu of degree	0	0	2	8	0	0	1	4	1	8
Not Listed	0	0	2	8	1	6	2	8	0	0
Coursework	0	0	1	5	1	6	1	4	2	15

The demand for an ALA-MLS peaked in 1997 for technical services positions with 97% of positions requiring one. Acceptance of a non-accredited MLS has been on a steady decline, going from 13% in 1982 to 3% in 1997. The acceptance of equivalent degrees also was at its height in 1997 with 10%. Degrees other than the MLS have never been in high demand, averaging about 5% and then peaking in 1992 with 11%. Only 2 positions in 1992 preferred, but did not require an MLS, and four positions total allowed experience in place of a degree. Only eleven ads did not mention an education requirement. Coursework has been consistent over time averaging about 13%. A chi-square analysis showed the results as significant [Figure D].

Figure D
Technical Services - Education

	1982	%	1987	%	1992	%	1997	%	2002	%
ALA-MLS	77	87	161	90	76	92	70	97	57	93
MLS	12	13	9	5	4	5	2	3	3	5
Equivalent Degree	3	3	7	4	1	1	7	10	3	5
Degree other than MLS	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	3
Degree in addition to MLS	4	4	6	3	9	11	3	4	1	1
MLS Preferred	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Experience in lieu of degree	2	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1
Not Listed	0	0	7	4	3	4	0	0	1	1
Coursework	11	12	21	12	13	16	8	11	8	13

$\chi^2 = 48.38691899$
 $df = 32$
 $p = 0.031680749$

Reference positions requiring an ALA-MLS were strongest in 1992 and 1997, with 96%. Acceptance of a non-ALA-MLS has been steadily declining from 11% in 1982 to 3% in 1997. Allowing an equivalent degree saw its peak in 2002, with 14% of the positions listing it. A degree other than the MLS was the strongest in 1987 and 2002 with 5%. There was a larger demand for an additional degree in 1992 with 15%, but has been on a decline since with only 9% in 2002. 2002 was also the first time that many positions said an MLS was only preferred, with 9%. Experience in lieu of a degree has been on the decline since 1982 with only one position allowing it in 2002. Fourteen positions total did not list an education requirement. Coursework requirements have taken a dive since 1992 when 23% of ads listed a requirement. Again, the chi-square test found the results statistically significant [Figure E].

Figure E
Reference - Education

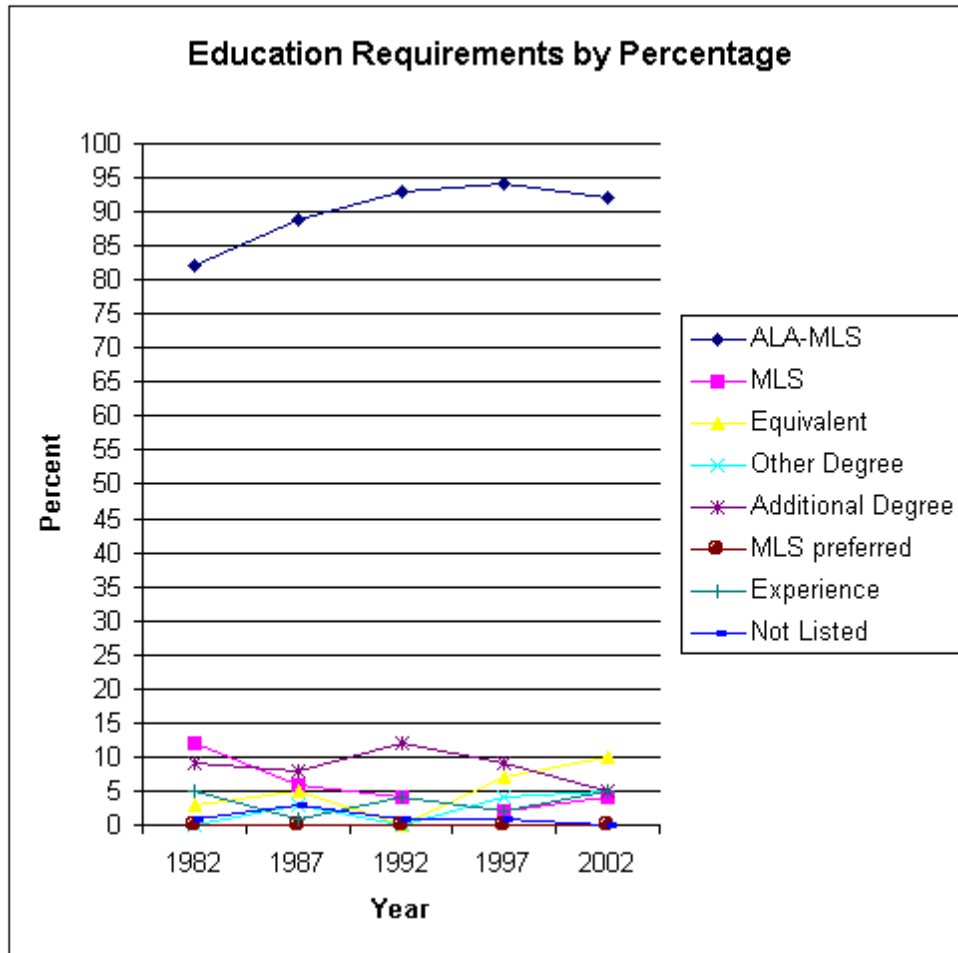
	1982	%	1987	%	1992	%	1997	%	2002	%
ALA-MLS	113	81	223	89	160	96	178	96	124	93
MLS	16	11	19	8	6	4	6	3	7	5
Equivalent Degree	4	3	15	6	1	1	13	7	19	14
Degree other than MLS	1	1	12	5	0	0	5	3	7	5
Degree in addition to MLS	17	12	32	13	25	15	23	12	9	9
MLS Preferred	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	9
Experience in lieu of degree	11	8	4	2	10	6	5	3	1	1
Not Listed	3	2	6	2	1	1	3	2	1	1
Coursework	27	19	58	23	31	19	34	18	18	13

$\chi^2 = 120.3289795$
 $df = 32$
 $p = 3.68154E-12$

Overall, 1997 saw a peak in the requirement of an ALA-MLS, while requiring a degree in addition to the MLS was at its height in 1992. Technical services were the most likely to require an ALA-MLS with 92% of the positions listing it as mandatory. Systems librarian positions were the least likely to require an MLS with only 75% of positions

requiring it. Collectively, acceptance of a non-accredited MLS has been on the decline, while acceptance of a degree other than an MLS has been on the rise. Systems librarian positions were the least likely to require an MLS and showed a trend towards accepting work experience instead of a degree, unlike the other two types of positions. Additionally, by 2002 systems positions began to place a larger emphasis on coursework while other positions saw a trend of placing less emphasis on coursework [Figure F].

Figure F



Required Experience

The next variable examined was the required experience for each position. Required experience was divided into seven sections:

- Technical Services experience
- Collection Development experience
- Computer/automation experience

- Reference experience
- Bibliographic Instruction experience
- Supervisory experience
- Other work experience, such as general experience in a library or experience working with the public

Systems positions showed the requirement for technical services experience peaked in 1997, with 12% of the positions requiring it, while no positions required it in 2002 or 1982. Collection development experience was only seen in 2002, making it the least required of the experiences. A big increase in the demand for computer experience occurred going from 58% in 1987 to 85% in 2002. Reference experience has never been in high demand, fluctuating between no ads requiring it or one ad requiring it. Supervisory experience peaked in 1992 with two jobs requiring it, to only one ad listing it in both 1997 and 2002. Other work experience has seen a steady increase, going from 8% of the jobs in 1987 to 38% in 2002. There was not enough data to calculate chi-square for systems positions [Figure G].

Figure G
Systems - Experience

	1982	%	1987	%	1992	%	1997	%	2002	%
Technical Services Experience	0	0	2	8	0	0	3	12	0	0
Collection Development Experience	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	15
Computer/Automation Experience	0	0	14	58	9	53	16	62	11	85
Reference Experience	0	0	1	5	1	6	0	0	1	8
Bibliographic Instruction Experience	0	0	0	0	2	12	0	0	1	8
Supervisory Experience	0	0	0	0	2	12	1	4	1	8
Other Work Experience	0	0	2	8	2	12	4	15	5	38

Technical Services positions saw an upward trend towards actual work experience in the technical services field. Percentages range from a low of 34% in 1987 to a high of 49% in 1997. Collection development experience has had little demand, with a peak of 6% of the positions requiring it in 1987. Additionally, there has been growing demand

for computer experience, with over 30% of ads requiring it in 1997 and 2002, up from 10% in 1987. The requirement for additional reference experience peaked in 1992, with 10% of jobs listing it, but has never been in high demand. There has been little emphasis on Bibliographic Instruction experience, with only 2 ads total listing it as a requirement. Supervisory experience is on the rise again after falling to a low of 4% in 1992 to a high of 16% in 2002. The requirement for additional work experience was highest in 1997 with 15% of positions listing it, although it has not been a huge increase from other years. The chi-square test showed a statistical significance in the overall data [Figure H].

Figure H
Technical Services - Experience

	1982	%	1987	%	1992	%	1997	%	2002	%
Technical Services Experience	39	44	60	34	32	39	35	49	29	48
Collection Development Experience	0	0	10	6	2	2	0	0	0	0
Computer/Automation Experience	19	21	19	10	19	23	23	32	18	30
Reference Experience	2	2	1	1	8	10	5	7	2	4
Bibliographic Instruction Experience	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0
Supervisory Experience	9	10	12	7	3	4	6	8	10	16
Other Work Experience	6	7	19	11	7	8	11	15	8	13

$\chi^2 = 48.09258665$

$df = 24$

$p = 0.002458336$

Reference placed little emphasis on technical services experience, with an average of 2% of positions requiring it. Collection development experience peaked in 1997 with 7% of positions requiring it. Computer/automation experience rose yearly until 1997 with 31% of positions listing it. Reference experience remained around 17% except for 1997 when 31% of positions required it. Bibliographic instruction experience saw a huge rise from 3% in 1982 to 17% in 1997 and 10% in 2002. Supervisory experience has always been low with an average of 3% of the positions listing it as a requirement.

Finally, other work experience on average has been required in 17% of the jobs, reaching a peak in 1997 with 22% of the jobs. Overall data analysis shows the differences as statistically significant [Figure I].

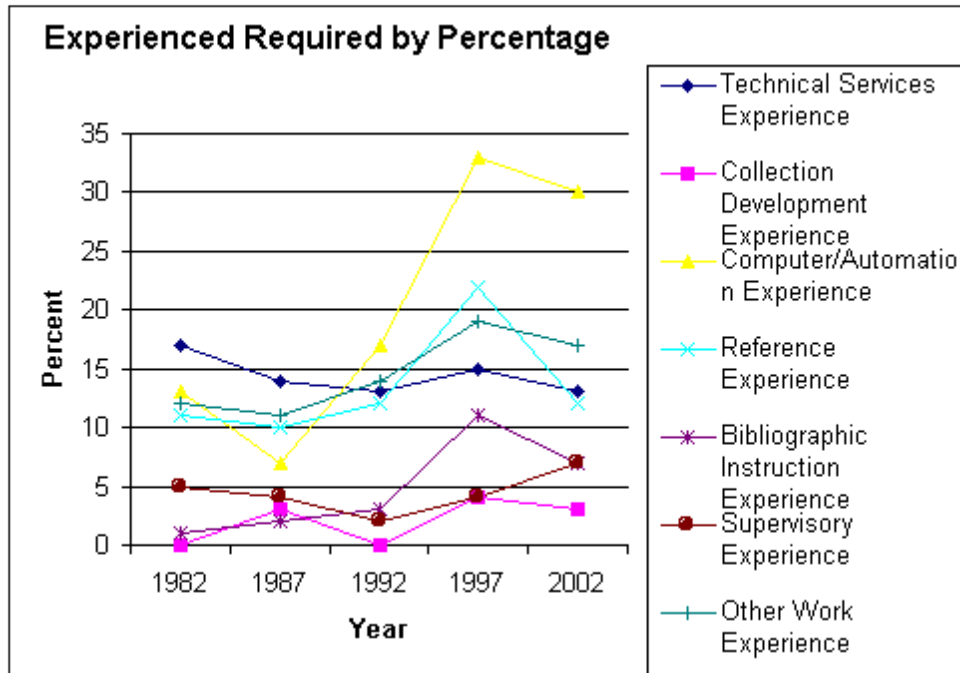
Figure I
Reference - Experience

	1982	%	1987	%	1992	%	1997	%	2002	%
Technical Services Experience	2	1	5	2	3	2	5	3	0	0
Collection Development Experience	2	1	4	2	0	0	13	7	5	4
Computer/Automation Experience	12	9	3	1	19	11	57	31	35	26
Reference Experience	25	18	44	18	24	14	58	31	23	17
Bibliographic Instruction Experience	3	2	10	4	5	3	32	17	14	10
Supervisory Experience	4	3	10	4	2	1	7	4	5	4
Other Work Experience	24	17	29	12	30	18	41	22	23	17

$\chi^2 = 61.84531466$
 $df = 24$
 $p = 3.49023E-05$

Overall, systems librarian positions have been the most likely to require actual experience in that field with 52% of positions requiring actual computer experience. Technical services also had a large number of jobs requiring experience in the technical services field with 43% of the job ads listing it as mandatory. There has been little interest in experience in other sections of the library, such as reference librarians with technical services experience. Collection development experience is in low demand for all positions. Bibliographic instruction experience has been highest for reference librarians with 7% of positions requiring it, although systems positions have seen small increases also. Supervisory experience is most often required for technical services with 9% of positions listing it as required, while reference had the least. Other experience has remained steady for all the positions averaging about 14% [Figure J].

Figure J



Knowledge/Skills

Required knowledge or skills was categorized similar to the experience categories:

- Foreign language knowledge
- Collection Development knowledge
- Technical Services knowledge
- Reference knowledge
- Computer/automation knowledge
- Bibliographic Instruction knowledge

No systems position required foreign language or collection development knowledge. Systems ads saw a move away from requiring technical services knowledge with only 6% in 1992, but increased to 19% in 1997 and 15% in 2002. Reference knowledge was only asked for in four ads while computer/automation has always been high, peaking at 85% in 1997. Bibliographic instruction skill has been inconsistent only appearing in 1987 with 21% and 1997 with 23% [Figure K].

Figure K
Systems - Knowledge

	1982	%	1987	%	1992	%	1997	%	2002	%
Foreign Language Knowledge	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Collection Development Knowledge	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Technical Services Knowledge	1	50	8	33	1	6	5	19	2	15
Reference Knowledge/Skill	0	0	1	5	1	6	0	0	2	15
Computer/Automation Knowledge/Skill	1	50	14	58	7	41	22	85	7	54
Bibliographic Instruction Skill	0	0	5	21	0	0	6	23	0	0

Technical services have seen a decrease in the demand for a foreign language going from 36% in 1982 to 11% in 2002. Collection development knowledge peaked in 1987 with 12% and fell to 0 in 1997. Demand for technical services knowledge has steadily risen, starting with 40% in 1982 to 64% in 2002. Reference knowledge has not been in high demand with only 6% of positions listing it as required. Computer/Automation knowledge has also seen a marked increase from 9% in 1982 to 42% in 1997. Bibliographic instruction skills have always been low, but peaked in 2002 with 5%. Again, the analysis showed a statistical significance [Figure L].

Figure L
Technical Services - Knowledge

	1982	%	1987	%	1992	%	1997	%	2002	%
Foreign Language Knowledge	32	36	55	31	24	29	21	29	7	11
Collection Development Knowledge	0	0	12	7	2	2	0	0	1	2

Technical Services Knowledge	36	40	86	48	41	49	42	58	39	64
Reference Knowledge/Skill	1	1	5	3	8	10	6	8	5	8
Computer/Automation Knowledge/Skill	8	9	35	20	20	24	30	42	25	41
Bibliographic Instruction Skill	4	4	1	1	0	0	2	3	3	5

$\chi^2 = 61.69829291$

$df = 20$

$p = 3.87583E-06$

Reference positions requirement for foreign language peaked in 1992 with 9% but fell to 5% by 2002. Collection development knowledge has remained low, hovering around 6%. Technical services knowledge is also low, with about 3% of positions requiring it. Reference skill requirement saw its peak in 2002 with 46% of positions listing it as mandatory. Computer skills plateaued in 1997 with 46% listing it. Bibliographic instruction skills have had huge increases going from 8% in 1982 to 39% in 2002. The results were found to be statistically significant [Figure M].

Figure M
Reference - Knowledge

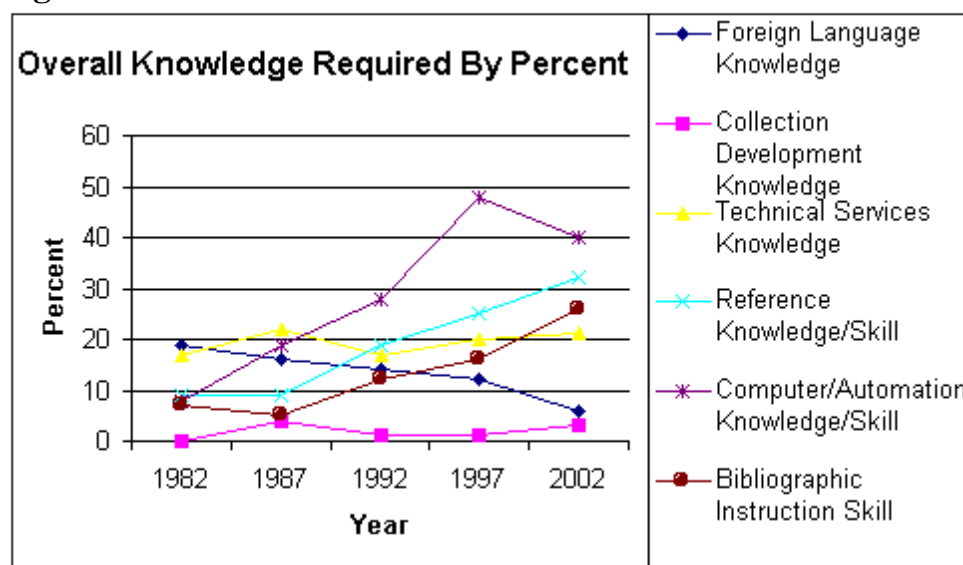
	1982	%	1987	%	1992	%	1997	%	2002	%
Foreign Language Knowledge	12	9	20	8	15	9	14	8	6	5
Collection Development Knowledge	0	0	10	4	3	2	4	2	7	5
Technical Services Knowledge	3	2	7	3	4	2	11	6	3	2
Reference Knowledge/Skill	22	16	35	14	42	25	67	36	61	46
Computer/Automation Knowledge/Skill	11	8	39	16	49	30	86	46	52	39

Bibliographic Instruction Skill	13	9	18	7	33	20	40	22	52	39
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$\chi^2 = 57.796479$
 $df = 20$
 $p = 1.55297E-05$

Overall, foreign language requirements have been on the decline since 1982, with technical services most likely to require them and systems positions the least likely. Collection development knowledge has remained low, with reference positions most likely to ask for it. Technical Services and reference have all sharply increased for their respective disciplines. Computer/automation knowledge rose dramatically and peaked in 1997 as a requirement. Bibliographic instruction skill remains low, but reference has seen the largest increase for it as a requirement [Figure N].

Figure N



Personal Abilities

Required personal abilities were divided as follows:

- Ability to work with others/diversity awareness
- Public service commitment
- Supervision/leadership ability
- Interpersonal skills, such as oral and written communication skills
- Ability to participate in scholarship and professional development

Systems librarian positions saw the ability to work with others/diversity awareness at its highest in 2002 with 38%. Public service commitment has remained low with about 5% of positions requiring it. Supervision/leadership ability has declined from 50% in 1982 to 15% in 2002. Interpersonal skills have been consistently high averaging about 82%. The ability to participate in scholarship and professional development has risen from zero in 1982 and 1987 to 15% in 1997 and 2002 [Figure O].

Figure O
Systems - Personal Abilities

	1982	%	1987	%	1992	%	1997	%	2002	%
Diversity Awareness/ Working with others	0	0	6	25	1	6	6	23	5	38
Public Service Commitment	0	0	1	5	2	12	5	19	1	8
Supervision/ Leadership	1	50	2	8	2	12	5	19	2	15
Interpersonal Skills	2	100	15	63	9	53	22	85	10	77
Scholarship/ Professional Development	0	0	0	0	1	6	4	15	2	15

Ability to work with others/diversity awareness saw a huge jump for technical services positions from 8% in 1992 to 62% in 2002. Public service commitment has also risen from 2% in 1982 to 23% in 2002. Supervision/leadership ability has remained steady, averaging about 13%. Interpersonal skills have sharply risen from 17% in 1982 to 79% in 2002. Ability to participate in scholarship and professional development has also seen an increase from none in 1982 to 23% in 2002. Interestingly, this was the only chart that the chi-square test did not find a statistical significance [Figure P].

Figure P
Technical Services - Personal Abilities

	1982	%	1987	%	1992	%	1997	%	2002	%
Diversity Awareness/ Working with Others	7	8	44	25	19	23	30	42	38	62

Public Service Commitment	2	2	15	8	2	2	10	14	14	23
Supervision/ Leadership	9	10	24	13	8	10	12	17	9	15
Interpersonal Skills	15	17	82	46	43	52	49	68	48	79
Scholarship/ Professional Development	0	0	10	6	7	8	10	14	14	23

$\chi^2 = 24.44276103$

$df = 16$

$p = 24.44276103$

Reference positions' requirement for the ability to work with others/diversity awareness has increased from 19% in 1982 to 54% in 2002. Public service awareness saw a giant leap from 6% in 1982 to 46% in 2002. Supervision/leadership ability has not changed, averaging about 6%. Interpersonal skills have had a dramatic increase from 19% in 1982 to 77% in 2002. The ability to participate in scholarship and professional development has risen from none in 1982 to 26% in 2002. The data in this chart showed statistical significance according to the chi-square test [Figure Q].

Figure Q
Reference - Personal Abilities

	1982	%	1987	%	1992	%	1997	%	2002	%
Diversity Awareness/ Working with others	27	19	52	21	49	30	76	41	73	54
Public Service Commitment	10	7	34	14	40	24	64	34	62	46
Supervision/ Leadership	8	6	20	8	7	4	13	7	9	7
Interpersonal Skills	26	19	128	51	104	63	142	76	103	77
Scholarship/ Professional Development	0	0	12	5	21	13	19	10	35	26

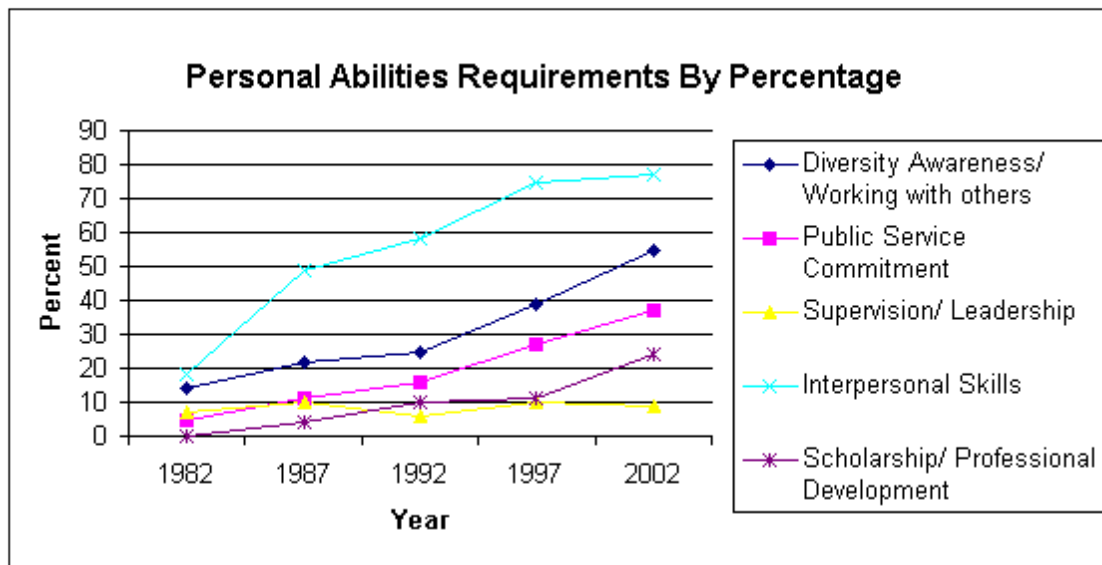
$\chi^2 = 54.20910966$

$df = 16$

$p = 4.79305E-06$

The findings concluded there was an increased demand for diversity awareness and working well with others with 51% of positions requiring it by 2002. Public service commitment has found increasing support, especially among reference positions. Supervision/leadership skills were at their highest in 1997, with technical services positions most likely to require them. Interpersonal skills became very important. By 2002 nearly two-thirds of the positions required them. Additionally, there has been an increase in demand to participate in professional activities, while no position listed it as a requirement in 1982 [Figure R].

Figure R



ANALYSIS

The total ad count revealed that technical services positions have been declining in numbers. Reasons for this include automated systems replacing manual tasks and the loss of some positions to systems through the separation of technical services and systems departments. Throughout the study, technical services positions were always a smaller percentage than reference positions, in agreement with Reser and Schuenman [Reser and Schuenman, 1992].

By 2002, the total number of positions advertised was the lowest of all the years examined, showing that professional jobs have been decreasing. Probably in part because many libraries have posted positions online rather than advertise in print. Reser and Schuenman noted that not all libraries advertise nationally for entry-level positions [Reser and Schuenman, 1992] meaning there were probably many ads not included in the survey. Less posting of entry-level ads, but not upper management positions would also explain why the percentage of administrative postings increased yearly.

Analysis of the required education data clearly shows that while it has been possible to enter the profession with a degree other than an MLS, the ALA-MLS remains the standard, in agreement with Beile and Adams [Beile and Adams, 2000]. Systems librarian positions were the most likely to hire without an MLS, indicating that many needed systems skills can be obtained without library school. On the other hand, the increase in required coursework for systems positions implies it is difficult to locate a qualified candidate with the proper experience, so employers are relying on coursework as a substitute. The allowance of work experience in place of a degree also hints at the difficulty of finding qualified candidates with an MLS. Overall, acceptance of a non-accredited MLS has seen a slow decline. Prospective candidates without an accredited degree will have a harder time securing a position than in the past. The move away from required coursework stipulations for technical services and reference positions shows that taking a class cannot substitute for actual experience in the field.

The difficulty in locating qualified candidates is also a possible explanation of why systems positions salaries are larger than either reference or technical services positions. Technical services positions pay slightly more than reference positions, reflecting the technical services' stronger demand for prior experience and knowledge.

The required experience data shows a marked increase in the amount of expected experience for applicants. Systems, technical services, and reference librarianship all showed increasing demand for computer experience. Systems positions had an intense demand for computer experience, which is not surprising since the bulk of their duties are focused on working with computer technology. A decrease in technical services experience for systems librarians shows a decoupling of the systems and technical services departments, many of which were once integrated. Technical services data also indicated that more experience was required than in other positions, making it the most difficult field to enter without prior library experience. Reference librarianship's large increase in bibliographic instruction data indicated that bibliographic instruction has recently become a major part of reference duties.

An interesting trend in technical services librarianship was a decrease in the demand for knowledge of a foreign language; this could be due to the lack of qualified candidates and the availability of bibliographic utilities such as OCLC to catalog foreign language materials. Another interesting trend in systems librarianship was a significant decrease in the level of technical services knowledge required. This may be representative of systems librarianship moving away from its technical services roots as varying library technologies away from technical services became increasingly important. Data from recent years; however, shows a comeback in technical services knowledge for systems librarians. This is likely indicative of the continued importance of the automated catalog as a core library technology. Collection development knowledge has remained low for all areas, indicating it is not an entry-level skill. All

three areas showed an increasingly strong demand for knowledge in their respective fields, possibly indicating a decrease in on-the-job training. Reference librarianship indicated a strong increase in the demand for knowledge of bibliographic instruction, again indicating that bibliographic instruction has become a large part of a reference librarian's duties. Computer/automation knowledge rose dramatically and peaked in the 1997 data. By 1997 computer knowledge was becoming much more commonplace across all professions so it became less necessary to advertise specifically for it.

Analysis of the required personal attributes data shows that library employers over the time period sampled began placing greater emphasis on the more "human" aspects of librarianship. A large increase in diversity awareness and working well with others illustrates the growing emphasis on tolerance and cultural awareness in the workplace. Interpersonal skills saw the largest jump of any area, showing that all candidates must have a minimum level of communication. Reference librarianship showed the strongest trend, beginning with the 1997 data, toward a greater public service commitment. The data mirrors the trend to orient services towards the user. The ability to participate in scholarship and professional development shows a new emphasis on the research aspect of information science and not just on the regular day-to-day activities.

Overall the data suggests that the requirements in job ads increased from the 1982 data to a peak in the 1997 data, with a lessening observed in the 2002 data. Between 1997 and 2002 seems to be a time where it became more difficult to locate qualified candidates, and some of the requirements for entry-level jobs began to lessen. Kaufman noted in 2002 that "recruitment pools are small" [Kaufman, 2002]. Trends in the data are clear however that over time more and more experience, knowledge, and personal attributes were required for applicants seeking the advertised positions. Technical services librarianship positions in particular required more knowledge and experience than reference or systems positions. This was in agreement with earlier findings by Chaudry and Komathi [Chaudry and Komathi, 2001]. There has not been much emphasis on cross training, or knowledge of other library departments functions, implying library departments remain largely independent of other departments.

Conclusion

This study sought to test three hypotheses:

1. Over time, employers require experience and knowledge that cannot always be gained from library school.
2. On the job experience before obtaining a professional degree is almost mandatory.
3. The number of entry-level jobs is decreasing.

Analysis of the data shows the first two hypotheses hold true as valid. Over time employers required more knowledge and experience gained outside the classroom such as supervision/leadership skills, diversity awareness, and interpersonal skills, while decreasing the emphasis on coursework. Various types of required job-related experience, most notably computer/automation, technical services, and bibliographic instruction experience, show a strongly increasing trend among requirements by potential employers.

The data provided mixed results concerning the third hypothesis. Overall, the total number of ads decreased over time, even though the number and percentage of entry-level ads remained relatively constant. The data shows that employers in the later years of this study increasingly sought to hire more well-rounded and experienced entry-level applicants than in the earlier years, while keeping the actual number of entry-level positions constant. This also reiterates the first hypothesis's expectations that entry-level positions have changed over time.

Overall it appears that today's entry-level librarian will have the following qualities:

- They will have an ALA-MLS degree.
- They will have a high level of computer/automation knowledge and/or experience. At a minimum they will be a skilled user of the web, e-mail, desktop computer hardware, peripherals, and software. They may also have a fair degree of basic computer troubleshooting skills and the ability to create relatively complex web sites.
- Most will have a significant level of knowledge of, and/or experience in, their specific area of specialization or interest.
- They will exhibit a high degree of communication ability and interpersonal skills.
- They will have a high degree of diversity awareness and ability to work well with others regardless of background.
- They will show evidence of scholarship or scholarly ability.

Experience gained on the job either before or while obtaining a professional degree does appear to be almost mandatory in order to qualify for most advertised positions. The data also infers a steady decrease in on-the-job training. Applicants seeking to enter the profession without paraprofessional experience will find themselves at a major disadvantage. New hires in professional positions do not receive the amount of training as in years past.

This has implications for both students and graduate library programs alike. Students should no longer accept that a graduate degree in library or information science is enough to gain entry into the profession. They should seek to identify as early as possible what specific area or areas of the profession interest them and then endeavor

to gain as much practical experience in those areas as possible. At the very least they should gain as much real-world general library work experience as possible to go along with their education. Graduate schools in library or information science could provide better preparation for their students by making practical library experience a part of their programs. Perhaps this practical experience could be modeled after many graduate medical programs that require so many hours of clinical experience as part of their educational program and degree requirements. More emphasis could be placed on core competencies for graduating professionals to make the transition into a new job smoother.

This study intended to show some of the macro-level trends in the area of hiring practices in the library and information science profession. There is always room for more work along these lines as these trends continue into the future. Gaining a better understanding of these trends will help ensure that future prospective librarians and libraries seeking new employees will come together in the most productive way possible.

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