

Don't dream it, be it!

West Australians Library Technicians Group host a skills audit workshop

Have you ever met a colleague who has a dream job, or read about a job that totally fires your imagination? Very few of us could truthfully say that we are at the pinnacle of our careers or totally satisfied with ourselves. Some of us may be working towards our ideal job, some of us are waiting for the ideal job to magically materialise, and some of us (heaven forbid) may have given up on ever achieving job satisfaction. Whichever category we find ourselves in, there is always something to be gained from acquiring or refining job searching skills.

As part of a continuing program to provide professional development opportunities for their members, the West Australian Library Technicians group arranged a 'skills audit' workshop. Held in early May, the workshop was written and presented by Pauline Hodson, then a librarian at Curtin University. She was assisted by Brenda Ellen, a library technician with the Battye Library and Bonnie Rae Bruce, a library technician at Curtin University. The intent of the workshop was to enable the participants to identify their dream job, identify the skills gap that existed between themselves and their dream job, as well as the

means by which to reduce and finally close that gap.

Held at the State Reference Library in Perth the workshop was attended by twenty-five participants. The workshop began with Pauline presenting the theory behind career/skills audits and explaining why and how these audits should be undertaken. She stressed that a career plan is a very personal thing, but that each plan has common elements: self assessment, market research and goal setting. By engaging in self assessment we are able to identify our short-, mid-, and long-range goals and articulate the elements that make up our dream job. We also identify barriers to our success, and the means to overcome these barriers.

The theory provided by Pauline was then applied in a practical way as the participants broke up into small groups where, using current job ads, they identified the skills sets that employers were looking for and discussed the means by which they could acquire and build on these skills sets. The groups also discussed methods of improving ones skills, experience and qualifications through formal

study, on the job training and participation in workshops and seminars and involvement in ALIA groups.

The final part of the workshop was a presentation by experienced people from within the industry — Lorraine Lovett, employment services co-ordinator, Information Enterprises Australia Pty Ltd; Jennie Barwick, corporate services librarian, Library and Information Services, Curtin University; and Andrea Vinciuillo, course co-ordinator of Library and Information Studies at Central TAFE (Perth). The speakers identified what they saw as the 'hot skills' for employment in the information industry.

The participants were provided with several handouts to help them to conduct their own skills audits, as well as a bibliography for further reading. Feedback about the workshop has been excellent, and our first success was Pauline herself. As a result of the research she undertook to write the workshop, she re-evaluated her own career plan, and has taken a position as librarian at Geraldton TAFE in the North West of Western Australia.

*Bonnie Rae Bruce, convenor,
WA Library Technicians Group*

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Friday 30 November—Saturday 1 December 2001
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- How women find out what they need to know from government sources
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- Information literacy and community: a UK perspective
- Network literacy and the digital divide: the role of the Public Library
- Information Literacy and the community: a Singapore perspective

Speakers include

Rev Tim Costello Director Urban Mission Unit, Baptist Church
Chris Masters Four Corners ABC TV
Carmel O'Loughlin Director Office for the Status of Women, SA
Lorraine Bruce University of Washington, US
Sheila Webber University of Sheffield, England

For information on how to register contact

Irene Doskatsch Senior Librarian, Information Literacy
University of South Australia Holbrooks Road Underdale
South Australia 5032 tel 08 8302 6279 fax 08 8302 6756
email irene.doskatsch@unisa.edu.au