

for each of your local councils, universities, non-profits, state government, and library, and check their employment pages regularly. Even when signed up with agencies, it's a good idea to check their job pages regularly and contact them about relevant positions.

- Get involved in the LIS community. Join ALIA and attend local events, or create your own local LIS group. Getting actively involved will increase both your marketable skills and your contact base. Volunteering for ALIA also keeps you active in the LIS community and in the loop during periods of unemployment.
- Get some committee and project management experience. This can be in the LIS field or in another volunteering area, such as a local club.
- Sign up to ALIA's Professional Development scheme, and actively contribute to your own professional development.
- Consider enrolling in short courses, such as ALIA's FOLIOz, or going back to university to complete your Master's, or start a new one in a related field.
- Use the ALIA NewGrad e-list. Many jobs are advertised there, and you can seek out advice and exchange ideas with other new graduates.
- Be open to new experiences. You may conceive of yourself as an academic, public, or special librarian: broaden your horizons, and don't be afraid to try something new. Research each position you apply for, and tailor your application.

These are all strategies that can be used in order to find a job in good times and bad. Tough times may require you to use more of them. You may think of additional strategies, and, if so, please share them with the New Graduates list. Good luck out there, to all of us.

Naomi Doessel is Chair of the New Generation Advisory Committee (NGAC), and available for hire. She was assisted in this article by Katie Hannan and Andrew Finegan, both active members of NGAC and currently employed in the LIS field.

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## Professional development: check your rating!

How do your professional credentials stack up against the competition? Don't wait for a vacant position to check your rating, do it today! Be ready to respond to selection criteria rather than react to it.

Using Library Speak for librarians, there are six checkpoints you can do to make you stand out in the competition not stand in the competition.

### 1. Stocktake

Write down all your qualifications, skill sets, and areas of expertise. Discard what is obsolete, identify gaps in your current qualifications, skill sets, and areas of expertise, and investigate ways you can fill those gaps. Delete qualifications, skill sets, and areas of expertise that have been superseded, and upgrade if possible to meet the current requirements.

### 2. Circulation

Keep abreast of what is happening in the library information industry. Read magazines, journals, and online articles that will keep you current about new trends and innovations.

### 3. Membership

Join e-lists, and professional affiliations such as ALIA, to build up

your networks for opportunities to contribute and learn new skills and knowledge to make connections with other professionals that could potentially be mentors, referees, future employers, and advocates. If a committee is being formed for a specific project that would help you fill a gap in your skill set, why not volunteer?

### 4. Acquisition

Invest in yourself and your training, study, attend professional development workshops, or ask to attend a conference that is of interest to you. Look for opportunities to do higher duties, relieving in a position, secondments, and job exchanges. There may be funding you can apply for fellowships, grants, sponsorship to do research, benchmarking in your chosen area of expertise or interest.

### 5. Catalogue

Accurately record your achievements: if you attend training, ask for a statement of attainment. If you complete higher duties etc, ask for a testimony of what you achieved during that period from your manager. If you volunteer on a committee, ask for a reference from the convenor for your CV. Keep certified copies of awards, qualifications, and attainments so that you can certify what you have done.

### 6. C.R.E.W.\*

Constantly review, evaluate and weed – your qualifications, skill sets, and areas of expertise. The same processes apply for a collection development as your ongoing professional development. The same principles also apply.

To survive in this economic climate of constant change and uncertainty, libraries need to be accurate, authoritative, current, and objective. To meet the demands of this evolving profession, library professionals need to have qualifications, skill sets, and areas of expertise that are accurate, authoritative, current, and objective.

If you do not have these opportunities available to you, ask for them in your annual appraisal. Source appropriate opportunities to learn and bring them to your manager's attention – your manager may not be aware of them. Volunteer and get involved, discuss professional development with your peers. Start an elist or blog, chair a bi-monthly get-together to find what is happening.

Check your rating, make a plan, be proactive, and ask yourself 'what if I did this?...what if tried that?...'

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*\*The Crew method was created by Belinda Boon of the Texas State Library in 1995 as a collection development tool.*

## PD & Gen Ys: using web 2.0 to track the journey of new grads

As new graduates fresh out of our studies, our view of professional development was probably similar to most new grads: it's a good idea, it's something I should do, but I need to find a job. After all, we had just spent four years studying for the purpose of getting a dream library job, and wanted to direct all our energies towards finding one. It would be some years later that we finally would find ourselves working in a graduate library position (our current dream job), and then both quickly realising that professional development is a *vital* part of surviving in the library world.

We are two new librarians who for the past nine months have been working as Graduate Librarians at the University of Adelaide. Our position is three years long, with our time divided between Research and Reference and Metadata Services. We hope to emerge as well-rounded librarians with skills and knowledge that we can take wherever the library world leads. Having come from different working backgrounds, one of us working as an

Information Officer within a university and the other from a public library/special library assistant background, working within an academic library was, well, very daunting at first. Keeping up-to-date with happenings in the library world was vital to our survival and success in our new workplace, and also helped us find our feet in the wider library universe.

As two tech savvy Gen Y librarians we decided to use web 2.0 to help make our professional development happen. Using web 2.0 was not foreign to us. We were familiar with interacting and using these tools in a social environment. It was therefore logical for us to translate this to communicating and documenting our learning within our graduate positions. We started with a blog, where as *SuperLibrarians* we shared ideas, resources, and links we had found with one another. Literature suggests that gen Ys are widely observed to thrive on interaction, excitement, and rapid change<sup>1</sup>. Our blog became a space for professional interaction between us and allowed us to keep track of thoughts and ideas about our rapid development.

A very cool way we've found to facilitate our professional development is e-portfolios. E-portfolios are a hot topic at the moment. Definitions vary, but we would describe e-portfolios as electronic platforms that support a person's learning by giving them somewhere to store things they create while learning (assignments, evidence from projects, articles, thoughts), reflect upon their learning (writing about thoughts in blogs), and choose who they share this with. PebblePad is one example of an e-portfolio system.

Earlier this year we attended the Australian ePortfolio Symposium (AeP2) at QUT and become participants in the ALIA e-portfolio study. Armed with our new, flash, and exciting PebblePad accounts, we use e-portfolio tools to document and facilitate our professional development. We left our old blog behind and began by setting up a blog within our e-portfolio.

This blog has evolved to have several different functions. Here, we share our experiences as new graduates, ideas about projects we would like to tackle, details of projects we are working on, and skills we are learning. This is particularly useful as we are spending time in different areas. We share what is happening in our work to document and store knowledge that, when we swap positions, will give some valuable background to help with the transition. Our blog is also our own information repository where we share and store useful resources and links about the profession.

Within our e-portfolio we document and reflect on training activities we have attended. We share this reflection with each other and with our mentors. We hope that this store of knowledge and skills will be very useful when applying for jobs at the conclusion of our current positions.

We encourage other new graduates to experiment with web 2.0 to document their professional development and to share, interact, and collaborate with other new graduates. Even if you are not yet working in your dream library job, using web 2.0 is a great way to keep in touch with the library world and show prospective employers that you are passionate about your professional development. Interacting with web 2.0 also gives you great practical experience with working with new technology. As new graduates we have found that professional development together with web 2.0 has been a key part of our survival in the new and exciting library world which we are now a part of.


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1. Deloitte Consulting, 2008. *Who are the Millennials? A.K.A. Generation Y* [http://www.deloitte.com/dtt/cda/doc/content/us\\_consulting\\_hc\\_millennials\\_110608.pdf](http://www.deloitte.com/dtt/cda/doc/content/us_consulting_hc_millennials_110608.pdf)



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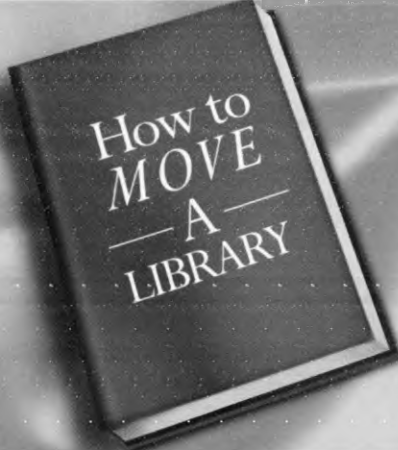
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