

Core Competency Training: Areas to Consider for Technology Testing for Public Services Staff



Essential Computer Skills for PS Staff

If you think about it, the list of technology competencies needed by public services staff (those in adult, teen and youth services who directly serve the public's information and computer needs) is quite long. Here are some major areas:

*Know procedures for turning on/off computer, monitor and applicable peripherals plus appropriate way to log onto/off staff and patron accounts—staff and patron machines

*Know how workstations (computer, monitor, keyboard, mouse and attached peripherals) are put together—staff and patron machines

*Have basic understanding of how library LAN works and functions in relation to online catalog, library system or consortium and the internet in general

*Know how to operate any hardware and software available to patrons (ie. reservation system, print vending system, wireless network)

*Have sufficient knowledge of library computer applications such as MS Suite, e-mail, online catalog, internet browsers, messaging software, blogging and/or Content Management Software as applicable

*Be familiar with media storage devices that staff and patrons use and how to save data to these media (CDs, DVDs, flashdrives)

*Have sufficient knowledge AND the ability to communicate that knowledge to be able to give patrons of all ages basic computer assistance PLUS be able to answer patron queries about major system particulars (example: What version of Windows does the library use? Do you have filters? How do I save on this CD?)

*Know some basic computer troubleshooting techniques

Wow, that is a lot! And there are always new things to learn, too!



What are easy, no-cost and painless ways to implement testing and training?

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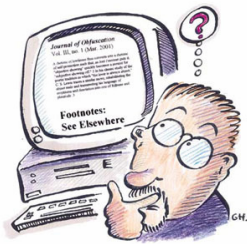
***Have some hands-on exercises in small groups.** Disconnect workstations and then put them back together again. Make sure everyone gets a chance to understand what goes where.

***Learn from each other!** Pair up your staff so that they can do hands on activities together and benefit from each other's knowledge and experience.

***Assign a team of partners to demonstrate a new task to the group.** No pressure, it can be a small, friendly group! Small groups work best anyway.

***Arrange for an open forum type question session with your IT department.**

Generally, IT staff really like to show off what they know, so take advantage of that by getting your department together with IT for a demonstration/question session. Make sure to keep it small so everyone gets to see what is going on and gets to ask questions. Encourage staff to make notes about their questions ahead of time; if possible, forward these on to IT so that they can be prepared with applicable hardware/software.



Confused about some computer or internet terms? Wondering what that abbreviation means? Try these:

Online Computer and Internet Terms:

<http://www.webopedia.com/>

IM, Text message abbreviations:

http://www.webopedia.com/quick_ref/textmessageabbreviations.asp

Online auction acronyms:

http://www.webopedia.com/quick_ref/onlineauctionabbreviations.asp