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People Profile: Antje Mays

Editor

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job preparation in practical fields such as acquisitions is generally led to impromptu learning on the job (Giles 2002, Gorman 2006). Skills needed for success in acquisitions librarianship include knowledge of business, accounting, automation, library systems, vendor relations, customer service to serve one's clientele, often other languages, and usually management. Rather than learning these areas in library school, librarians often learn them on the job and at workshops, or bring them from prior paraprofessional experience or previous career fields.

**Recruiting and Placement**

**Skilled Acquisitions Librarians: Why and where are they going?**

Acquisitions job lists abound, as evidenced by a search in Websites of library associations and library journals, professional listservs, and the Chronicle of Higher Education. Advertised positions often reflect increasing emphasis on electronic materials; positions for electronic resource and serials librarians comprise over half of listed positions examined. While electronic resources management is often a separate position, in lean times or in small libraries these duties are combined with the acquisitions librarian’s overall duties. Often the work entails managing print acquisitions plus overseeing major technology and workflow redesigns. Acquisitions positions also reflect increasingly blurring lines between acquisitions and collection development, thus often marrying “the mechanics of purchasing” with the intellectual tenets of collection development and management.

What do hiring libraries look for? Stated requirements include knowledge of several areas or functions: business practices, software suites including spreadsheets and database programs, and library systems, in addition to the business of acquisitions. Preferred knowledge and experience include management, leadership (especially in large, complex, and/or multi-site organizations), accounting, vendor relations, negotiating license agreements, knowledge of scholarly publishing methods and trends, proficiency in other languages, understanding of international and specialized material sources, supervisory and organizational skills, complex problem-solving and decision-making skills, and a track record of professional development and service.

Many positions suffer from small candidate pools and reopened searches. Newly minted librarians interested in acquisitions rarely have the desired continued on page 69