DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 401 935 IR 056 210

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TITLE Bridging the Gap between Librarians and Corporate Training.
PUB DATE Mar 96
NOTE 58p.; Master's Research Paper, Kent State University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Undetermined (040) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Libraries; *Corporate Education; Curriculum Development; Distance Education; Educational Cooperation; Human Resources; *Instructional Material Evaluation; Job Training; *Librarians; *Library Collection Development; National Surveys; *Remedial Instruction; Remedial Teachers
IDENTIFIERS *Corporate Libraries

ABSTRACT

A perceived lack of educational preparedness on the part of the American workforce has led many corporations to offer remedial education and basic skills training to their employees. Distance learning technologies have been increasingly utilized to deliver this training. The selection process employed by human resource training managers in evaluating and selecting training resources was compared to the selection process used by corporate librarians in performing collection development responsibilities for the corporate library. A national survey was administered to 100 corporate librarians and 100 training managers in private, for-profit companies to determine the compatibility between the two processes for the purpose of developing an effective distance learning-based, remedial education and basic skills training collection in a corporate library. The survey achieved a 25% response rate. A review of the literature in the library and training and development fields failed to demonstrate any link between the two groups. Results of the survey support an assumption of similarity in that little significant difference was found between the two groups in the areas of selection criteria, methods, and policies employed. Significant differences between the two groups were found when comparing decision-making elements. Collaboration between the two groups would seem to enhance the corporation's ability to provide optimum employee training while increasing the value of services provided by the corporate library, although this was not recognized by either group of respondents. Appendices include cover letters and questionnaires for corporate librarians and human resource training managers. (Contains 21 references.) (Author/SWC)

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN LIBRARIANS AND CORPORATE TRAINING

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the
Kent State University School of Library and Information Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree Master of Library Science

by

Michele S. Wood

March, 1996

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A perceived lack of educational preparedness on the part of the American workforce has led many corporations to offer remedial education and basic skills training to their employees. Distance learning technologies have been increasingly utilized to deliver this training. The selection process employed by human resource training managers in evaluating and selecting training resources was compared to the selection process used by corporate librarians in performing collection development responsibilities for the corporate library. A national survey was administered to corporate librarians and training managers to to determine the compatibility between the two processes for the purpose of developing an effective distance learning-based, remedial education and basic skills training collection in a corporate library. A review of the literature in the library and training and development fields failed to demonstrate any link between the two groups. Results of the survey support an assumption of similarity in that little significant difference was found between the two groups in the areas of selection criteria, methods and policies employed. Significant differences between the two groups were found when comparing decision-making elements. Collaboration between the two groups would seem to enhance the corporation's ability to provide optimum employee training, while increasing the value of services provided by the corporate library. This was not recognized by either group of respondents.

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INTRODUCTION

EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Numerous studies performed over the last decade have demonstrated a decline in the educational preparedness of the American workforce (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1984; Johnston and Packer, 1987; Harris, 1991; Mirvis, 1993). These studies have linked the ability of American corporations to compete effectively in the global marketplace with the quality of education and training possessed by their respective employees. Corporate investment in employee education and training has become a critical strategic priority due to the emergence of a global economy characterized by constant change, the rise in technological complexity of our workplace environments, and the erosion of our national educational standards by systematic tolerance of mediocrity (Johnston and Packer 1984).

The 1991 Harris "Laborforce 2000" survey of supervisors or others involved in hiring decisions found that respondents rated new hires negatively over 50% of the time in such key areas as the ability to read and to understand instructions, to perform simple arithmetic, having skills that could easily be applied to performing their jobs, having the capacity to concentrate on their work, and possessing the ability to solve problems that occur on their jobs (Mirvis 1993). Results of the survey have indicated that a majority of American companies are concerned about their ability to recruit

qualified candidates for entry-level positions, for those positions requiring scientific/technological skills, and for positions requiring skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled blue-collar workers (Mirvis 1993).

Training and development efforts within corporations have expanded beyond production-oriented process training programs such as TQM, executive development programs for managerial professionals, and issue-oriented training in areas such as diversity and sexual harassment. Increasingly, efforts have grown to include remedial education and basic skills training for new hires and for existing employees who must upgrade their skills for re-training. This trend is particularly evident in the utilities, transportation, communications and manufacturing industries which are undergoing rapid technological changes and deregulation.

The type and amount of actual training being provided by American companies with 100 or more employees is tracked annually by Training, a journal specializing in business training and development issues. Findings from the annual surveys show that there has been a 15% increase in the amount of companies providing remedial/basic skills education since 1990. In the 1994 surveys, 22% of responding companies were providing remedial education, defined as reading, basic arithmetic, writing and English as a Second Language (ESL); 45% of survey respondents were providing remedial education/basic skills training as a combined category, which includes those skills listed above as well as others not clearly defined. For the purpose of this study, remedial education and basic skills training will be defined as reading, writing, basic arithmetic, ESL, basic personal computer skills/applications,

communications and problem solving. Broken out separately in the surveys, basic computer skills, communications and problem-solving skills training was provided by 88%, 84% and 65% of respondents in 1994, respectively (Filipczak 1994). Provision of remedial education/basic skills training is expected to increase in the future as American companies strive to maintain a competitive advantage.

DISTANCE LEARNING

Due to escalating costs associated with the provision of off-site training (travel, meeting planning, trainer fees, etc.), and ongoing innovation in telecommunications and computer technology, human resource training managers have sought more effective and efficient ways to deliver needed education and training. Traditional approaches such as tuition reimbursement for completion of external coursework at local colleges and participation in on-site or off-site seminars led by professional trainers are being supplanted by other methods. Differential learning needs of employees coupled with the multi-tasking capacities of computer technology have led to a greater interest in distance learning as a preferred method of delivering education and training in the workplace. The flexibility in choice of materials, learning methods and technologies employed in distance learning makes it extremely useful in cases where corporations have diverse training requirements, where employees need individualized programs, where the same learning must take place concurrently at multiple sites, and where high turnover rates require continuous training of new hires or re-training of existing employees due to "right-sizing" or "re-engineering" (Piskurich 1994).

The concept of distance learning has been variously defined by educators and trainers over the last twenty years. Definitional commonalities between the two schools of thought seem to center around the physical separation of student/learner and teacher/trainer, and the use of multiple media involving some combination of audio, video and computer technology for delivery of the learning material. For the purpose of this study, distance learning will be defined as any method for delivering education and training that does not involve face-to-face instruction in a traditional classroom, seminar or campus-based setting (Hodgson 1993). This definition allows for self-directed study using print, audio/videocassettes, films, slides, CD-ROMs and self-assessment instruments, as well as interactive methods utilizing television and computer-assisted instruction. The actual material used in distance learning training may be produced in-house, purchased prepackaged or customized, purchased intact but customized internally, or a combination of any of the above (Filipczak 1994).

CORPORATE LIBRARIANS AS INFORMATION RESOURCE MANAGERS

The burgeoning alternatives for providing education and training via distance learning make the responsibility for selecting optimal technologies and media bewildering at best for human resource training managers. Education and training can be categorized as an information resource, regardless of the form or manner of delivery. The management of information resources within an organization, as related to the evaluation, selection and delivery of information for use by employees, is characteristically performed by librarians or information specialists within the confines

of a library or information center. Those libraries or information centers located within business environments, as distinct from public, academic or school library settings, are generally defined as special or corporate libraries, and their managers or supervisors are referred to as corporate librarians or corporate information specialists. For the purposes of consistency and simplicity, the terms corporate library, corporate librarian and training manager will be used hereafter, as will the generic term corporation, to denote any U. S. company, corporation or organization engaged in a business enterprise, regardless of the entities' legally defined status.

Corporate librarian as information resource manager is an evolving concept within many corporations. Traditionally, the purview of corporate librarians was limited to the provision of print material such as books, journals, proceedings, reports, and audiovisual materials (films, slides, recordings, microform, -film, -fiche). More recently, the information residing in these materials or the materials themselves have become available in electronic or digital format accessible by computer, modem, fax, printer and CD-ROM. Use of computer and telecommunications technology for locating, retrieving and delivering information has required that corporate librarians become techno-literate or quasi-expert information technologists. As corporate librarians have become more proficient at evaluating, purchasing and using technology for managing information resources, they are participating in long-range planning and decision making related to the selection and provision of corporation-wide information services and technology. Not infrequently, the corporate library has a more technologically advanced infrastructure for providing information services than most other departments

within the corporation.

Relevant, timely information is recognized as essential to informed decision making at all levels in a corporation. The corporate librarian's role of passive provider or just-in-case collector has increasingly evolved into a proactive one where just-in-time information subjected to tailored repackaging is being provided to more and more corporate decision makers on an ongoing basis. One such area or department that is both suitable and ripe for this service is the corporate human resources training department. In conjunction with the perceived need to provide more employee training as well as different types of training, the profusion of choices as to type of resource and manner of provision makes the decision-making process a complicated one. As noted earlier, many corporations are increasing their reliance on distance learning as the preferred manner of delivery in order to cut costs, to provide flexibility and to accommodate employees at multiple sites, divisions or subsidiaries.

By virtue of background and training, the corporate librarian has much to offer corporate training managers in terms of assistance in evaluating and selecting employee education and training materials. The essential process involved in locating, evaluating, selecting and acquiring relevant information resources for use in the corporate library, referred to as collection development in the library field, should be somewhat similar to the process that a training manager would undergo in selecting educational and training resources. This similarity would be further pronounced due to the multiplicity of formats, varying technological requirements and diverse user needs that must be considered during the decision-making process.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM/RESEARCH SITUATION

Given the increasing importance accorded to the task of providing employee education and training within a corporation, and given the magnitude of the task of selecting appropriate training resources, it would be counterproductive to ignore the potential contribution of corporate librarians to the performance of this task.

The purpose of this study is to determine what policies, methods and criteria should be used to develop a distance learning-based, remedial education/basic skills training collection in a corporate library which will meet the needs of training managers and end-users. What are the evaluative criteria and methods used by training managers in their selection process? What are the evaluative criteria and methods used by corporate librarians in their selection process? How much involvement do corporate librarians and training managers have in the decision-making process for selecting employee education and training resources, respectively?

A sample of corporate librarians and training managers will be surveyed as to the methods and criteria deemed useful to them in selecting distance learning-based employee education and training resources at the remedial/basic skills level. One objective of this study is to compare the components of the selection processes so that an analysis of the comparative data will yield a comprehensive set of criteria useful for developing an effective collection in this area. A second objective of this study is to identify the respective levels of involvement in the decision-making process for selecting training resources so that a mutually useful connection can be established between the corporate library and the human resource training

department, the purpose of which is to simplify and to expedite the selection and implementation of employee education and training programs within the corporation.

LIMITATIONS

For the purposes of this study, training or educational materials produced in-house will be excluded as there is no need to apply selection criteria. The decision to use in-house training material implies that the corporation possesses the required production facilities, staff and expertise to create it themselves; however, this does not necessarily apply to customization of materials since that service is frequently purchased from the vendor. It is beyond the scope of this study to evaluate the merits of using one type of technology over another, or one type of learning material over another, as related to their respective abilities to achieve specific learning objectives. There is an assumption that training managers assess the learning needs of employees on an ongoing basis as a function of their overall responsibility for providing employee training and development. There is also an assumption that a certain level of technology is already in place or is planned for in a corporation, and while the corporate librarian may be involved in planning or selecting computer and telecommunications technology to be used within the corporation, it is outside the purview of the library to make recommendations based upon achievement of specific employee learning goals and objectives.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A significant amount of literature in the field of librarianship has been devoted to

the area of collection development. Some of the literature has been policy oriented such as that emanating from the American Library Association (ALA), or of a general theoretical nature constituting "major works." Other material has been written with a specific type of library or collection in mind, e.g., techniques for developing collections for school libraries, academic libraries and law libraries, or compilations of review sources to be used for developing medical, engineering, music or business collections. Still other literature has focused on collection development from the standpoint of selecting formats or media for access. Little material has been produced on collection development for special libraries generically, and none was found pertaining specifically to corporate libraries and non-library employee education and training, i.e., no literature was found which provides a review of sources, techniques or media to be used in developing employee education and training collections in corporate libraries.

Within the field of education, distance learning has long been a topic written about and debated as an adjunct to the provision of traditional classroom education. The majority of the literature is directed toward educators, although a small percentage has addressed cross-over applications of the technology (only) to business training. In a number of instances, articles in the ERIC database and even in library journals have discussed distance learning and libraries in the same breath; however, these articles focus primarily on academic libraries and their need to provide access to curriculum-specific materials for those students pursuing degrees from a distance.

In the general press, articles can be found which illustrate a particular company's experience with or use of distance learning to provide employee training. The bulk of

information available on the topic of distance learning for employee education and training is found in the human resource training and development literature. The cross-over application of library collection development practices to training department selection processes for employee education and training resources has not been explored in any known literature.

LIBRARY LITERATURE

The latest edition of the ALA's guidelines for collection development policies defines collection development as "the process of planning, building and maintaining a library's information resources in a cost- and user-relevant manner... through the identification, selection, and procurement of locally appropriate materials, allocation of the resources budget among different subjects and formats, liaison with users, and planning and implementation of resource sharing and related programs" (American Library Association 1989). All of the above activities would apply equally to corporate librarians for building library collections, as well as to training managers for developing employee education and training programs; both must identify, select and procure materials appropriate to their users which is commonly performed in conjunction with user needs assessment, both must determine funding priorities, and both must assess resource sharing capabilities for their respective departments.

Pertinent contributions from the theoretical category within the last fifteen years focus on principles of collection development and the selection process itself (Katz, 1980; Broadus, 1981; Gardner, 1981; Wortman, 1989; Kovacs, 1990; Evans, 1995). Katz (1980) offers a list of evaluative criteria for selecting materials; it will be used, in

combination with the sources to follow, to form the basis for the library-oriented criteria to be used in this study. His list of criteria to be assessed includes purpose/scope, audience, level of difficulty, authority/honesty/credibility of authors and publishers, subject matter, comparison with other works, format, price, timeliness, whether it supports a particular collection/curriculum area, and demand.

Broadus' (1981) criteria are also noteworthy, though more philosophical than those of Katz. His list includes title, content, recency, truth, freedom from bias, reputation of publisher/author, presentation, paper/typography/design/binding, special features and size. His discussion of selection aids--lists, guides, book reviews, indices and bibliographies is relevant, but somewhat dated and generally inapplicable to the topic of employee education and training. However, there is usefulness to be gained by his emphasis on discerning the value of the selection aid before you employ it, i.e., its degree of comprehensiveness, selectiveness, annotation and currency, along with knowledge of the author/publisher/compiler, the targeted audience, the scope and whether ratings, recommendations, comparisons and bias are included.

Gardner's (1981) work builds on that of both Katz and Broadus. Gardner's lengthy list of criteria for judging materials includes authoritativeness, accuracy, impartiality, recency, scope, coverage, appropriateness, relevance, interest, organization, style, aesthetic qualities, technical aspects, physical characteristics, special features, library potential and cost. He suggests that the overriding concern in the selection process must be the balance between (user) demand and value (quality), i.e., considering what the user wants while simultaneously considering the intrinsic

quality of the material and its value to the collection. Echoing Katz, above, this perspective is particularly critical when evaluating educational and training material for the end use of others which has not been prescribed by a curriculum or formal instructor, as is the case in academic and school libraries.

Wortman (1989) discusses the critical importance of personally knowing your user community and understanding their information requirements before contemplating the selection of pertinent materials. The mission, goals and objectives of the library are determined by the information needs of its users. This particular rule-of-thumb is central to the functioning of all corporate libraries as 95% of the content of a corporate library collection will be directly dictated by the needs of users who carry out the corporation's business activities. User demand or need can only be determined by active assessment on the part of the corporate librarian. In the case of building a collection for the purpose of educating and training employees, the corporate librarian must, out of necessity, initially rely on training managers to relay the information requirements of end-users. The corporate librarian can assess trainer-as-user needs, however, there is an assumption that training managers will have already performed assessment of the learning needs of the employees to be trained (end-users); this information must also be known by the corporate librarian before evaluation or selection of material can proceed.

Kovac's (1990) work highlights elements in the decision-making process which precede selection of materials. She suggests that both internal and external factors influence the decision-making process. For the purposes of this study, pertinent

internal factors would include the experience, training and expertise of the corporate librarian and any others involved in the selection process. External factors that impact the process would be environmental circumstances prevailing at the time, e.g., funding constraints, political impasses, processing or time requirements, technological or equipment requirements, and acquisition and authorization policies as related to vendors used or interdepartmental approval required. Determination of who has responsibility and authority for selecting, acquiring and providing materials is important to this study, since development of the collection will necessitate interdepartmental cooperation between the corporate librarian, the training staff and the technology services department (or whomever has final authority for technology and telecommunications decisions and procurement beyond the confines of the library).

Evans' (1995) book is not only the most up-to-date contribution, but it is also one which actually addresses the special/corporate library setting. With the acknowledgement that only a small percentage of a corporate library collection will constitute traditional print sources, he provides multi-media selection criteria beyond that traditionally used for selecting print material. He discusses both audio-visual and electronic media. The main criteria for audio-visual materials is divided into four sets of factors: programming, content, technical and format. Programming considerations relate to how the material will be used (by individuals or groups, in the library or at a desktop, whether the material can circulate or is for prearranged use only, and whether it will require library staff to set-up, guide or instruct in its use). Content factors include purpose, length of program, organization, ease in following through the

program, accuracy and currency with regard to language and fashion. Technical factors address whether motion, visuals or color are necessary, the quality of focus and composition, quality of editing, synchronization of audio and visuals, quality of sound/distortion and the viewing environment required. Format factors relate to cost, availability of carrier mediums, equipment and maintenance concerns.

For electronic materials, relevant formats include full text, software and image data. Selection criteria centers around content, access, support and cost. Content considerations are similar to those used for print and audio-visual materials. Access however, refers to where, when, and how the material will be used as well as its compatibility with existing systems and networks. Support concerns are related to the quality of vendor-produced documentation, vendor reliability, availability of on-site technical support, the amount of training needed to use the material and from whom and how it will be provided. Cost criteria covers an analysis of initial and ongoing costs for the material itself plus upgrades, equipment, training, transmission, connection, licensing and facility-related expenses.

Policies and methods used by corporate librarians to develop collections, as suggested by the literature, are summarized in the lists following; selection criteria is delineated in table 1. While the focus of this study is on the development of an employee education and training collection at the remedial/basic skills level, the considerations would be applicable to collection development in any area involving multiple media.

General Policies:

1. An understanding of the mission, goals and objectives of the corporation dictates the selection criteria in terms of content, purpose and organization.

2. Knowledge of user (and end-user) needs determines the selection criteria related to appropriateness and relevance to the audience, authority of the provider, technical and aesthetic qualities, ease of use and interactiveness, and training required to use the material.

3. Knowledge of existing and future technological capabilities within the corporation guides the selection criteria in terms of media, format, compatibility with existing equipment, and need for vendor support.

4. An understanding of the decision-making process employed within the corporation guides the overall process of selection, acquisition and provision of resources. Decisions that hinge on the importation of new technologies or media must be analyzed with a comparative return-on-investment strategy after consideration of immediate and long-term needs, and consultation with all applicable parties.

Methodology:

The general method used by corporate librarians to locate and to evaluate resources is through consulting of selection aids. These aids include bibliographies, lists, abstracts, indices, review literature, reference guides, publisher advertisements and notification slips, approval plans, and assessment of past experience with the provider in terms of service needs met. Selection of equipment or automation systems is typically based on networking, vendor advertisements, demonstrations on-site and at trade shows, and the RFP/RFQ process.

TABLE 1

SELECTION CRITERIA DIVIDED BY MEDIA

Print	Audio-Visual	Electronic
Purpose	Purpose	Purpose
Content--subject, scope, coverage	Content	Content
Timeliness	Timeliness	Timeliness
Accuracy	Accuracy	Accuracy
Organization--presentation/approach/ arrangement	Organization	Organization
	Ease of use-- self-pacing	Ease of use-- interactiveness
Audience--relevance and appropriateness to	Audience	Audience
Comparability--content, format, vendors	Comparability	Comparability
Aesthetic qualities[a]	Aesthetic qualities	Aesthetic qualities
Technical qualities[b]	Technical qualities	Technical qualities
Authority--credibility/reliability of author/publisher/vendor	Authority	Authority
	Training required	Training
	Equipment required	Equipment
	Accessibility to user	Accessibility
		Quality of vendor documentation, support
Cost[c]	Cost--initial, ongoing	Cost--initial, ongoing

[a]For print material aesthetics includes quality of photography, illustrations; for audio-visual material it includes quality of visuals, motion, editing; for electronic materials it includes quality of visuals, graphics and interface.
[b]For print media, technical quality refers to binding, typography, durability; for audio-visual media, it refers to visual clarity, sound/distortion, synchronization of audio and video. For electronic media, it refers to quality of the visual/audio/graphic interface.
[c]Cost includes purchase and replacement for print media; for audio-visual media it includes initial cost of material, training and equipment, plus ongoing costs for replacement of material and equipment, and maintenance/repair. For electronic media, cost includes initial purchase of material, equipment, training, wiring and licensing, plus ongoing costs for upgrades or replacement of material and equipment, maintenance/repair, and ongoing transmission, receiving and connection fees.

HUMAN RESOURCES TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT LITERATURE

Turning to the area of employee education and training, information from the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) and other sources will be used to provide the framework for the selection of materials and distance learning technologies in the workplace.

Education and training materials used by corporations are either created in-house, purchased prepackaged from vendors, or the commercially produced material is customized to reflect the corporation's environment or training objectives. Training itself is done either by in-house staff, or by direct or indirect use of external vendors and trainers. Options for transmission of instruction include television broadcast via satellite or fiber optics, computer-assisted (software, CD-ROMs, multimedia CD-ROMs, videodiscs, laser disks, video or computer conferencing), or self-administered using videos, print material, audio, still visuals (transparencies, slides, filmstrips) and film (ASTD 1993). The level of interactivity, customizability, development time and perceived effectiveness of the technologies varies considerably (see Rae, 1994). It is up to the training manager, in conjunction with other involved parties, to ascertain which of the technologies would best fit the existing training need. Assessment of employee learning needs and objectives, budget constraints, time exigencies and environmental/technological considerations would all factor into the decision-making process.

The ASTD specifically recommends the creation of an in-house corporate "resource or learning center" which would contain the necessary instructional materials

and integrated technological infrastructure to permit ongoing, self-directed distance learning to take place. While the ASTD fails to link this concept to school library media centers or corporate library-provided bibliographic instruction and information services, such a center could clearly be integrated into the corporate library. It is an idea worthy of consideration for large corporations who are willing to provide the necessary space and additional staff to expand the existing library.

Training & Development designates the following selection criteria as useful to training managers for evaluating training resources (Galagan, 1995):

1. Design--organization, approach, context of delivery
2. Content/topic for the intended purpose
3. Target audience--for whom is it designed
4. Visual/audio/imaging quality of the material
5. Credibility of the product--believability of script, actors, presenters
6. Quality of workbooks, guides, documentation
7. Ability to customize product to corporation's specific needs or culture
8. Reputation of producer/vendor--expertise, references, previous relationship
9. Capability of vendor to provide support services as needed
10. Whether the product has been pre-tested to insure that it accommodates a variety of learning styles
11. Ease and style of interactiveness--viewer controls, self-pacing, interface
12. Vendor's willingness to provide results of a product's effectiveness and sales volume to prospective purchasers
13. Whether content and style matches the corporation's culture and operating environment
14. Whether evidence exists that the product meets its intended learning objectives
15. Timeliness
16. Compatibility with existing equipment and interfaces
17. Amount of training required to use/deliver/interact with the product
18. Willingness of vendor to permit a sample viewing or demonstration in advance of purchase
19. Time element required to complete program/view product
20. Cost

In Training (Filipczak 1994), the cost criteria is broken down into internal

and external factors. Internal costs are those associated with use of space for training purposes and administrative support from other departments. External costs include all expenses related to hardware (audio-visual equipment, computers and conferencing equipment, wiring), hook-up, connection, transmission, receiving, and licensing fees, training and consulting fees, off-the-shelf materials prepackaged in any form, customized materials purchased outright or later tailored, and rental or use of off-site facilities for viewing by multiple employees at distance locations.

In the same journal, Filipczak (1995) emphasizes the importance of vendor expertise, as in choosing a product that has been well-researched, pilot-tested and known to work with other customers. He also stresses the need to be able to customize the material, not just to the corporate culture, but to the needs of each specific learner within the organization.

Flynn, in Personnel Journal (1995), highlights the methods for learning how to select training resources and technologies. She suggests that training managers make a regular practice of reading all information sources pertaining to training technology, that they check out what other companies are doing, that they take advantage of networking and training provided by professional organizations of which they are a member, and consult directories and resource manuals published by pertinent professional and trade associations.

In order to insure that customized training material reflects and supports the corporation's values, vision, mission and goals, Delaney (1995) recommends that training managers develop an "instructor's guide" which introduces prospective

vendors to the corporation's environment and culture, as well as to their overall strategy for employee training and development. This saves considerable time negotiating with vendors who cannot meet the appropriate criteria and it is similar to the RFP/RFQ process that libraries pursue when making automation decisions.

The following lists will summarize the policies and methods used by training managers to select employee education and training resources, as indicated in the literature. Selection criteria was not distinguished by media or source cited as in the library literature, therefore, the selection list above will complete this section.

General Policies:

1. An understanding of the mission, goals and objectives of the corporation guides the selection of vendors and resources as related to design, style, content of material and vendor cooperation criteria.

2. Knowledge of user needs determines the selection criteria related to audience, technical and quality considerations, customizability, pre-testing, ease of use and interactiveness, amount of training required to use material, evidence of whether intended learning objectives are met, and credibility/reputation of vendor.

3. Knowledge of existing and future technological capabilities within the corporation guides the selection criteria in terms of format, media, compatibility with existing equipment, and need for vendor support.

4. An understanding of the decision-making process employed within the corporation guides the overall process of selection, acquisition and provision of resources. Decisions that hinge on the importation of new technologies or media must be analyzed with a comparative return-on-investment strategy after consideration of immediate and long-term needs, and consultation with all applicable parties.

Methodology:

General methods used by training managers to locate and to evaluate vendors

and resources include use of ASTD and other industry publications, literature and product reviews, directories, manuals, vendor advertisements, networking, samples or demonstrations viewed on-site or through visits to other corporations, results of studies or pilot tests done with the product, and an assessment of any previous relationship with the vendor.

SUMMARY

Employee education and training activities within corporations are expanding in both degree and type in response to ongoing changes in the internal and external operating environment, and a perceived lack of educational preparedness on the part of the workforce. The use of distance learning technologies to provide training is increasing, particularly at the remedial education/basic skills level. The flexibility in choices of material and delivery methods, and a demonstratable reduction in costs associated with continuous, repetitive training of large groups of employees at multiple sites has made distance learning a feasible strategy for delivering needed training.

Although decisions related to the provision of employee education and training typically fall under the purview of the corporate training department, educational and training material can be viewed as one of many information resources used by a corporation. Corporate librarians traditionally manage most information resources needed by users in the corporation, and due to their background and training in locating, evaluating, selecting, acquiring and delivering critical, relevant information to a variety of users, they are uniquely suited to assist training managers in this area.

Library collection development responsibilities mirror those of training managers in

developing a repertoire of employee training resources geared toward users' needs. It has even been suggested by the ASTD that corporations consider creating a learning resource center within the corporation to facilitate on-site and off-site learning and training. A review of the literature in the library field and in the training and development field has failed to illustrate any cross-over application of techniques and processes used by professionals in both fields.

This study has examined the policies, methods and selection criteria used by corporate librarians in developing a library collection, and those policies, methods and selection criteria used by training managers in developing employee education and training resources, as suggested in the literature from both fields. In table 2, the respective selection criteria will be compared with the intent to illustrate their similarities; the similarity between respective policy considerations and selection methods has already been established in the above text. The significance of the similarities in all three areas will be determined by surveying a sample of corporate librarians and training managers as to actual compatibility. Similarity in decision-making situations will also be surveyed.

Even without the creation of a learning resource center to meet employee training needs within the corporation, training managers and corporate librarians should be able to combine their skills and talents to develop an effective distance learning-based collection of remedial education/basic skills training resources in the corporate library.

TABLE 2

COMPARATIVE GRID OF SELECTION CRITERIA

CRITERIA	CORPORATE LIBRARIANS	TRAINING MANAGERS
1) Purpose (intent)	X	X
2) Content (scope/ coverage)	X	X
3) Organization* (design/ approach/arrangment)	X	X
4) Audience	X	X
5) Aesthetic qualities	X	X
6) Technical qualities	X	X
7) Authority of material, vendor (credibility/expertise reliability/reputation)	X	X
8) Timeliness	X	X
9) Accuracy	X	X
10) Comparability	X	X
11) Cost (initial + ongoing)	X	X
12) Ease of use	X	X
13) Training required	X	X
14) Equipment required	X	X
15) Accessibility	X	X
16) Vendor service, support	X	X
17) Compatibility w/existing system, equipment	X	X
18) Vendor demos--equipment	X	X
19) Vendor sample, approval--material	X	X
20) Material effectiveness**	X	X

*Assumes inclusion of the need for the material to satisfy corporate culture considerations (values, mission, goals) either as is or through customization.
**Assumes effectiveness is measured by the extent to which material achieves intended goals for which it is to be used--may be in terms of suitability to the collection, or in terms of meeting specified learning objections.

METHODOLOGY

A survey of corporate librarians and training managers will be conducted to compare their responses to policy, method, decision-making and selection criteria to be used in developing a collection of distance learning-based, employee education and training resources at the remedial/basic skills level in the corporate library. The degree of similarity among the responses of corporate librarians and training managers, and between the responses of corporate librarians and training managers will be measured. The intent of the survey is to develop an effective list of selection criteria for use by corporate librarians in developing this type of collection, and to insure that such a collection would meet the needs of all users.

A national, disproportionate, stratified sample of 100 corporations known to have a human resource training department and a corporate library was selected. A questionnaire will be mailed to 200 respondents, one each to the corporate librarian and training manager from each of the 100 corporations selected. The sample was obtained from listings in the 1996 Directory of Special Libraries and Information Centers and personal knowledge. The sample excluded all organizations except private, for-profit companies with corporate libraries, i.e., no entries were selected from organizations having academic, medical, school, public, museum or archival libraries, also listed in the above-named directory.

An attempt to control for factors that might cause inconsistencies in perception of corporate culture between groups, and inconsistencies in policy due to operating environment of the corporations in the sample was made by selecting sets of librarians

and training managers each from the same corporation only, and by including only those corporations classified as private, for-profit entities.

The survey will be personally administered by mailing of questionnaires in conjunction with a cover letter describing the nature of the study, confidentiality controls and remittance directions. Mailing of the questionnaires will commence in January, 1996, with a specified return date requested. A two-week period following the requested return date will be allowed before commencement of formal follow-up activities. Follow-up activities may include both postcards and telephone calls, but neither activity will be performed more than once for each non-respondent. Final cut-off time for return of the questionnaires will occur two weeks following the end of formal follow-up activities.

Questionnaires will be color-coded for each group and job title and nature of business will be requested. No personal information which would serve to identify respondents will be asked. Return envelopes will be coded so that follow-up activities can be performed. As questionnaires are received, envelopes will be separated from them to insure anonymity and confidentiality. When the study is completed, both the questionnaires and the mailing list will be destroyed.

Upon receipt of returned questionnaires, responses will be coded, tallied and analyzed to determine the degree of compatibility between the responses of corporate librarians as a whole, training managers as a whole, and between corporate librarians and training managers as two independent groups. Descriptive and inferential statistics appropriate to nominal and ordinal level data will be utilized.

DATA ANALYSIS

A 25% return rate on the survey was realized (51 completed questionnaires were returned out of 200 sent out). The highest rate of return came from corporate librarians (65%), with the remaining 35% coming from human resource training managers. The questionnaires were sent to sets of corporate librarians and human resource training managers each from 100 private corporations selected for the sample. A breakdown of the sample by industry and return rate by industry are summarized in table 3, below.

TABLE 3

PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLE AND RETURN RATE BY INDUSTRY

INDUSTRY	% OF SAMPLE	% RETURN RATE
Communications	5	2
Finance/Banking	5	4
Insurance	5	2
Manufacturing	65	57
Utilities	10	10
Other[a]	10	25
TOTAL	100	100

[a]Other category included consulting and "high tech" services firms.
Transportation was an industry category included on the questionnaire, but the actual sample did not include any transportation companies.

In keeping with the parameters of the sample, i.e., private, for-profit corporations

possessing a corporate library and also containing a formal human resources training department, the largest amount of questionnaires ended up being sent to manufacturers and the largest amount of returns came from respondents employed in a manufacturing environment. While librarians' names were obtained from a recent directory of special libraries and information centers, human resource training managers' names were obtained mainly through telephone calls to the corporations. Only seven questionnaires came back marked "addressee unknown."

The questionnaire was minimally field-tested on seven individuals to obtain feedback related to clarity, purpose, appearance and format--two corporate librarians, two library science instructors, two fellow library science students and one human resource manager. Since it was not known in advance whether any of the corporations in the sample actually employed distance learning technology or remedial education/basic skills employee training, respondents were asked to provide their opinions from a hypothetical standpoint in the event that neither remedial education/basic skills training nor distance learning technology was currently used by their company. The request to approach the questionnaire from an "as if" standpoint, rather than having questionnaires returned stamped "not applicable," was not perceived as a problem during field testing; however, four questionnaires were returned with "decline to complete," and the survey itself resulted in a low return rate of completed questionnaires.

Follow-up activity was limited to a postcard reminder and performed selectively on nonrespondents. At the point of commencement of follow-up reminders, 85% of the

final returns had been received. A pattern of nonreturn from very large corporations had already emerged, therefore, it was determined that additional effort expended on this segment of the sample would be a waste of time and money. Only a few sets were returned, i.e., where both the librarian and the trainer from the same company responded.

Speculation regarding the low return rate from librarians centers around possible unfamiliarity with remedial education/basic skills training material due to lack of collection development responsibility in this area, and lack of contact with human resource training managers. The low response from training managers may be due to the library-oriented framework of the study and the use of library terminology, as well as lack of contact with corporate librarians and a lack of understanding of their role in providing information services of this nature.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections: selection criteria, selection methods, policy and decision-making criteria that characterize the selection process. Corporate librarians and human resource training managers were requested to comment on the usefulness or importance of twenty-nine criteria to the process of developing a distance learning-based, remedial education/basic skills training collection in a corporate library. The identical questionnaire was sent to both groups except for the color of paper on which it was printed (blue paper for the librarians and green paper for the training managers), and the wording of question 29. Question 29 asked how important the librarian would consider the help of the training manager to be in evaluating and selecting training resources, and conversely, for the training

managers, how important the help of the librarian would be to the training manager.

The selection criteria section contained nineteen variables and respondents were given a choice of four values related to the usefulness of the criteria as guidelines for developing a distance learning-based, remedial education/basic skills training collection, hereafter referred to as the collection. The values ranged from very useful, somewhat useful, unsure of usefulness and not useful.

The selection methods section contained four statements, the policy and the decision-making sections each contained three statements. Respondents were asked for their perception of the importance of each of these statements as guidelines for evaluating training resources at the remedial education/basic skills training level for the collection. Values ranged from very important, somewhat important, to not important (see sample Questionnaires in appendix 1).

ANALYSIS

Minitab statistical software package was used to analyze the data from the questionnaires. Since all data were nominally or ordinally scaled, descriptive and nonparametric statistics were employed. Frequencies were generated for all twenty-nine criteria in group-by-variable contingency tables in order to determine group differences. The degree of agreement between observed and expected frequencies was inconclusive in many of the contingency tables. Percentage breakdowns of the observed frequencies in each group, for each variable, were calculated and compared. Table 4 illustrates an approximate ordering of the variables, from those showing the most significant difference between groups, to those showing the least significant

difference. Variable names are abbreviated from those used in the questionnaire.

TABLE 4

CRITERIA AS VARIABLES ORDERED FROM MOST TO LEAST SIGNIFICANCE BETWEEN GROUPS

1. Help from Other (LIB/HRM)	16. Vendor Previews
2. Technical Quality of material	17. Cost
3. Primary Authority for selection	18. Audience
4. Requests for Technical Specifications	19. Timeliness
5. Compatibility with existing equipment	20. Ease of use
6. Effectiveness of material	21. Aesthetic Quality of material
7. Amount of Equipment needed	22. Equipment demonstrations
8. Authority of publisher/vendor	23. Accessibility
9. Knowledge of company's technical capabilities	24. Literature Reviews
10. Purpose of material	25. User Needs
11. Organization of material	26. Content
12. Accuracy of material	27. Training Required
13. Use of Advertisements	28. Vendor Support
14. Networking	29. Vendor Demonstrations
15. Knowledge of Company Goals	

An arbitrary determination of significance was made at three levels: percentage differences $\geq$16% between the two groups were considered significant, percentage differences of 6-15% were considered slightly significant, and percentage differences between groups of $\leq$5% were considered not significant. With these breakpoints

defined, eight variables showed significant differences between the two groups, sixteen variables showed a slight difference, and five variables showed no significant difference between the two groups in terms of the degree of usefulness or importance respondents assigned to the variable. Results are summarized in table 5.

TABLE 5

SIGNIFICANCE BREAKDOWN OF VARIABLES BY PERCENTAGE DIFFERENCES

Significant ≥16%	Slightly Significant 6-15%	Not Significant ≤5%
Help from Other	Knowledge of company's technical capabilities	User Needs
Technical Quality of material	Purpose	Content
Primary Authority	Organization	Training required
Request for Tech Specs	Accuracy	Vendor Support
Equipment Compatibility	Use of advertisements	Vendor demos
Effectiveness	Networking	
Amount of Equipment need to use material	Knowledge of company's goals	
Authority of Vendor	Vendor previews	
	Cost	
	Audience	
	Timeliness	
	Ease of use	
	Aesthetic Quality	
	Equipment demos	
	Accessibility	
	Literature Reviews	

Contingency tables for the eight variables determined as showing a significant difference between groups are provided as tables 6-13. Chi-square tests were also run on all of the contingency tables. Only six tables contained sufficient expected frequencies in the cells to make the chi-square test feasible. Of those six tables, only two generated a significant chi-square test statistic. The variables "help from other" and "technical quality of material" showed significance and will be reported in table 6 and table 7, respectively. Contingency tables for purpose, networking, vendor demonstrations and knowledge of company's technical capabilities all generated usable chi-square tests, however, none of the test statistics were significant at any level.

TABLE 6

HELP FROM OTHER BY GROUP

Rows = Groups Columns = Help from Other (LIB/HRM)

	1	2	3	All
Corporate Librarians	15 (88.24)	10 (66.67)	8 (42.11)	33 (64.71)
Training Managers	2 (11.76)	5 (33.33)	11 (57.89)	18 (35.29)
All	17 (100.00)	15 (100.00)	19 (100.00)	51 (100.00)

Observed frequencies are shown normally, expected frequencies are shown in parentheses.

Chi-square = 8.396, df = 2, $p<.02$.

TABLE 7

TECHNICAL QUALITY BY GROUP

Rows = Groups Columns = Technical Quality of material

	1	2	3	All
Corporate Librarians	12 (80.00)	15 (53.57)	6 (75.00)	33 (64.71)
Training Managers	3 (20.00)	13 (46.43)	2 (25.00)	18 (35.29)
All	15 (100.00)	28 (100.00)	8 (100.00)	51 (100.00)

Observed frequencies are shown normally, expected frequencies are shown in parentheses.

Chi-square = 3.428, df = 2, p<.20.

TABLE 8

PRIMARY AUTHORITY BY GROUP

Rows = Groups Columns = Primary Authority for selection

	1	2	3	All
Corporate Librarians	15 (51.72)	15 (88.24)	3 (75.00)	33 (66.00)
Training Managers	14 (48.28)	2 (11.76)	1 (25.00)	17 (34.00)
All	29 (100.00)	17 (100.00)	4 (100.00)	50 (100.00)

Observed frequencies are shown normally, expected frequencies are shown in parentheses.

TABLE 9

REQUEST FOR TECH SPECS BY GROUP

Rows = Groups Columns = Request for Technical Specifications

	1	2	3	All
Corporate Librarians	18 (85.71)	13 (52.00)	2 (40.00)	33 (64.71)
Training Managers	3 (14.29)	12 (48.00)	3 (60.00)	18 (35.29)
All	21 (100.00)	25 (100.00)	5 (100.00)	51 (100.00)

Observed frequencies are shown normally, expected frequencies are shown in parentheses.

TABLE 10

COMPATIBILITY BY GROUP

Rows = Groups Columns = Compatibility with existing equipment

	1	2	3	All
Corporate Librarians	19 (73.08)	14 (58.33)	0 --	33 (64.71)
Training Managers	7 (26.92)	10 (41.67)	1 (100.00)	18 (35.29)
All	26 (100.00)	24 (100.00)	1 (100.00)	51 (100.00)

Observed frequencies are shown normally, expected frequencies are shown in parentheses.

TABLE 11

EFFECTIVENESS BY GROUP

Rows = Groups Columns = Effectiveness of material

	1	2	3	All
Corporate Librarians	23 (58.97)	8 (80.00)	2 (100.00)	33 (64.71)
Training Managers	16 (41.03)	2 (20.00)	0 --	18 (35.29)
All	39 (100.00)	10 (100.00)	2 (100.00)	51 (100.00)

Observed frequencies are shown normally, expected frequencies are shown in parentheses.

TABLE 12

EQUIPMENT BY GROUP

Rows = Groups Columns = Amount of Equipment needed

	1	2	3	All
Corporate Librarians	16 (57.14)	13 (68.42)	4 (100.00)	33 (64.71)
Training Managers	12 (42.86)	6 (31.58)	0 --	18 (35.29)
All	28 (100.00)	19 (100.00)	4 (100.00)	51 (100.00)

Observed frequencies are shown normally, expected frequencies are shown in parentheses.

TABLE 13

AUTHORITY BY GROUP

Rows = Groups Columns = Authority of vendor

	1	2	3	All
Corporate Librarians	14 (73.68)	14 (56.00)	4 (66.67)	32 (64.00)
Training Managers	5 (26.32)	11 (44.00)	2 (33.33)	18 (36.00)
All	19 (100.00)	25 (100.00)	6 (100.00)	50 (100.00)

Observed frequencies are shown normally, expected frequencies are shown in parentheses.

Content, audience, accuracy, accessibility, vendor material preview and effectiveness of material were all considered very useful selection criteria by a majority of all respondents (>75%). Training needed to use material/equipment and compatibility with existing equipment were both split 50-50% between the values of very useful and somewhat useful, as selection criteria, by all respondents. Knowledge of user needs as a selection policy was considered very important by a majority of respondents (>75%). Help from Other (LIB/HRM) for decision making resulted in an approximate three-way split among all respondents as to very important, somewhat important and not important (33:29:37%).

Among corporate librarians as a group, purpose, accuracy, accessibility, vendor authority, technical quality of material, and compatibility with existing equipment were valued higher as selection criteria. The use of advertisements, networking, literature reviews and demonstrations of equipment were valued more highly as selection

methods by librarians. Knowledge of corporate goals and the company's technical capabilities were also deemed more important as selection policies than for training managers. Help from training managers and requests for technical specifications were considered more important to the decision-making process for corporate librarians.

Conversely, human resource training managers found organization, audience, timeliness, aesthetic quality, ease of use, amount of equipment needed to use material, effectiveness, vendor previews and cost to be more useful as selection criteria than librarians. Primary authority for decision making as related to the selection process was more highly valued by training managers.

From the set of returned questionnaires as a whole, only one respondent answered "very useful" to all nineteen selection criteria; no respondents answered "very useful/very important" to all twenty-nine criteria. Five respondents found a selection criterion not important, fifteen respondents found a method criterion not important, twenty-eight respondents found a decision-making criterion not important (the largest percentage was help from other), and 31 respondents were uncertain of the usefulness of a selection criterion (the majority of uncertainty involved vendor demonstrations).

Given the small number of returned questionnaires, and given the narrowness of the range of values assigned for each criterion or variable, the ability to detect differences within each group is virtually impossible. The majority of training manager respondents were employed by a manufacturer (88%), while only about a third of corporate librarian respondents (39%) were employed in a manufacturing environment.

No other characteristics which would account for obvious similarities or dissimilarities among the responses of members of each group were apparent.

Results of the survey would suggest that a majority of the original selection criteria, methods and policies, discussed earlier in the review of the literature section, could be considered useful by both groups as guidelines for the development of a distance learning-based, remedial education/basic skills employee training collection in a corporate library. Exceptions in the selection criteria category would include willingness of vendor to demonstrate equipment.

With regard to decision making, results of the survey showed that there was clearly a difference between groups in the amount of personal authority desired by decision makers. This was evidenced by the lack of willingness to consult with others during the selection process on the part of training managers, in particular.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Based upon reviews of the literature in both the library and the training and development fields, the techniques and processes used by corporate librarians and human resource training managers to select remedial education/basic skills training resources (material and equipment) should be similar. Both groups locate, evaluate and select material for the use of fellow employees, and both groups have numerous methods of accessing and delivering the material to end-users based upon the technological options at their disposal, as well as considerations such as cost and user needs. Although terminology used by the two groups in characterizing their respective selection processes is somewhat different, the essential concepts are

identifiable by both groups, as noted in table 2.

The results of the survey, wherein the same questionnaire, explanations and cover letter was sent to both groups, support the assumption above. Through an arbitrary determination of significant differences between the two groups based on percentage breakdowns of observed frequencies, only eight variables (approximately 25%) were identified as showing significant difference. Using the chi-square test, only two variables (approximately 5%) could be determined as expressing a significant difference between groups.

There was some variation between groups in the degree of usefulness or importance they assigned to specific selection criteria, methods and policies, but the decision-making criteria demonstrated the largest difference between the two groups. For corporate librarians, input from training managers and consultation regarding technical specifications were more important as guidelines than the desire for primary authority over the decision-making process. For training managers, primary authority was more important, and recognition of the benefits of help from others in the decision-making process was far less.

This study has demonstrated that the evaluative criteria, selection methods and policies used by corporate librarians and training managers in developing a distance learning-based, remedial education/basic skills training collection in a corporate library show little significant difference. With regard to the decision-making process, training managers perceive that primary authority over evaluating and selecting materials and technologies is more important than involvement or consultation with other parties,

even if their assistance would benefit or expedite the selection process.

Further study into this area could perhaps illuminate the reasons behind the lack of desire for mutual assistance, particularly on the part of training managers. How often do training managers use their corporate library or the services of their corporate librarians? How aware are training managers of the corporate librarian's experience and training in the area of locating, evaluating, selecting, acquiring and delivering all types of information as well as evaluating and using various technologies? Have corporate librarians effectively promoted their services in the area of evaluating and selecting resources to the human resources training department? How many corporate libraries presently contain employee education and training materials in their collections and how familiar are corporate librarians with the variety of materials and resources that constitute employee training and development?

The potential for corporate librarians to be of assistance to training managers in selecting these types of materials and technologies should be apparent. It is seemingly less obvious to training managers, therefore, corporate librarians must take steps to bridge the gap between information services provided by the corporate library and the human resources training department. Since the criteria, techniques and processes of both corporate librarians and human resource training managers are so similar with regard to selecting information/educational resources, collaboration between the two groups could result in the forging of a corporate library truly designed to serve employee information needs, as well as enhance employee education and training opportunities throughout the corporation.

APPENDIX 1

Cover Letter and Questionnaire for Corporate Librarians

Cover Letter and Questionnaire for Human Resource Training Managers

Follow-up Postcard sent to selected sample of nonrespondents

School of Library and Information Science
Columbus Program
(614) 292-7746

Kent STATE UNIVERSITY

January 3, 1996

RE: Bridging The Gap Between Librarians and Corporate Training

Dear Corporate Librarian:

Employee training and development activities within corporations have grown to include provision of remedial education and basic skills training, e.g., reading, writing, arithmetic, computer skills/applications, etc. Increasingly, this training is being done by use of distance learning technologies such as video, broadcast transmission, interactive multi-media, self-directed print materials, etc. While human resource training professionals typically administer training activities, corporate librarians can provide a valuable service in terms of locating, evaluating, selecting, and providing access to educational and training resources within the corporate library.

As a graduate student in the Kent State University School of Library and Information Science, I am conducting a survey to compare the respective policies, methods and selection criteria used by corporate librarians and human resource training managers in locating, evaluating and selecting distance learning-based educational and training resources at the remedial/basic skills level. The purpose of the study is to determine the compatibility between the processes of both groups of professionals in order to develop an effective collection in support of corporate training and development goals. **Your opinion is essential!**

The enclosed Questionnaire is **brief** (less than ten minutes of your time will be required to complete it). **Confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed**, and there is **no risk or penalty involved** in participating or withdrawing from this study (please see reverse side for details).

Your voluntary cooperation and prompt response are greatly appreciated. A stamped, self-addressed return envelope is included for your convenience.

Very truly yours,

Michele S. Wood
Graduate Student/Principal Researcher

P.S. **Please return the Questionnaire by January 17, 1996.**

124 Mount Hall, 1050 Carmack Road
Columbus, OH 43210

Bridging The Gap Between Librarians and Corporate Training is a study being conducted in partial fulfillment of my Master's degree in Library and Information Science (MLS). As the principal researcher, I will be the only person with access to the returned questionnaires. Your confidentiality is assured as neither your name nor that of your company's will be requested on the questionnaire. Return envelopes have been coded in the event that follow-up reminders become necessary; however, upon receipt of each questionnaire, the return envelope will be discarded. At the completion of the survey, the mailing list will be destroyed.

There are no apparent risks from participation in this study since your opinions are being requested anonymously, and the subject matter is not of a sensitive or proprietary nature. As indicated previously, your participation is essential to the successful completion of this study, but it is entirely voluntary. There is no penalty if you choose not to participate.

This study has been approved by Kent State University. If you have any questions regarding the questionnaire, the study itself, or results of the study, please contact me, Michele Wood, at (614) 844-6972, or my research advisor, Dr. Mary Machin, at KSU's Columbus Program Office (614) 292-7746. If you have questions related to Kent State University's rules for research, please contact Dr. M. Thomas Jones, Vice Provost and Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, at KSU's main campus, at (216) 672-2851.

QUESTIONNAIRE

The focus of this study will be on distance learning-based resources for employee education and training at the remedial education/basic skills level. The purpose of this Questionnaire is to determine the usefulness of the criteria and statements below as guidelines for developing a collection in a corporate library which will meet the needs of training managers and end-users (employees).

Remedial/basic skills training is defined as reading, writing, basic arithmetic, English as a Second Language, basic computer skills/applications, communications and problem solving.

Distance learning technologies include any method for delivery of education and training that does not involve face-to-face instruction in a traditional classroom, seminar or campus-based setting, e.g., audio/videocassettes, films, slides, workbooks, television broadcasts, computer-assisted instruction (software, multi-media CD-ROMs, videodiscs, laser disks, video or computer conferencing, etc.).

Even if you do not provide remedial/basic skills training or employ distance learning methods at the present time in your company, please answer as if you were planning to develop this type of collection. Upon completion of the questionnaire, please return it in the enclosed envelope.

Job title and type of industry are requested only for comparative purposes.

1. Job Title _____ (e.g., Corporate Librarian/ Information Specialist, or Training/Human Resource Development Manager/Specialist, etc.)

2. Type of industry in which you are employed (please circle or fill in most appropriate choice):

a. Finance/Banking
b. Insurance
c. Manufacturing
d. Communications
e. Transportation
f. Utilities
g. Other _____

Each selection criterion below is followed by a response set which offers four choices. Please circle the response which you feel best approximates your feeling about the usefuness of each criterion for evaluating distance learning-based training resources at the remedial/basic skills level (1 = Very Useful, 2 = Somewhat Useful, 3 = Unsure of Usefulness, 4 = Not Useful).

SELECTION CRITERIA:	Very Useful	Somewhat Useful	Unsure of Usefulness	Not Useful
3. Purpose/intent of the material	1	2	3	4
4. Content of material--scope, coverage	1	2	3	4
5. Organization of the material--design, approach, arrangement	1	2	3	4
6. Audience--appropriateness for target audience	1	2	3	4
7. Authority of author/publisher/producer/vendor (credibility, reliability, reputation, expertise in subject)	1	2	3	4
8. Timeliness--currency in language, fashion, roles characterized	1	2	3	4
9. Accuracy of material	1	2	3	4
10. Aesthetic qualities (illustrations, visuals, motion, editing, interface)	1	2	3	4
11. Technical qualities (binding, typography, visual/sound clarity, synchronization of audio-visual, text/graphic/audio interface)	1	2	3	4
12. Ease of use of material/delivery method	1	2	3	4
13. Amount of training required to use material/equipment	1	2	3	4
14. Amount of equipment required to use/deliver material	1	2	3	4

(Please continue on reverse side)

	Very Useful	Somewhat Useful	Unsure of Usefulness	Not Useful
15. Accessibility of material/equipment to user	1	2	3	4
16. Compatibility of material with existing equipment/system/network	1	2	3	4
17. Amount of vendor service and support available (documentation, training, previous relationship with vendor)	1	2	3	4
18. Willingness of vendor to demonstrate equipment	1	2	3	4
19. Willingness of vendor to allow pre-purchase viewing of material (approval plan, material sample or demo)	1	2	3	4
20. Material effectiveness (extent to which material achieves its intended goals--may be in terms of suitability to the collection, or in terms of meeting specified learning objectives)	1	2	3	4
21. Cost--initial and ongoing (initial costs include purchase of material/equipment, wiring, licensing, training, customizing fees; ongoing costs include replacement or upgrading of material/ equipment, connection, transmission, maintenance/repair fees.	1	2	3	4

The statements below represent methods, policies and decision-making situations that may characterize the selection process. Please indicate how important each statement is to you as a guideline for evaluating distance learning-based training material at the remedial/basic skills level. Circle the response which best approximates the importance you would assign each statement as a guideline in selecting training materials (1 = Very Important, 2 = Somewhat Important, 3 = Not Important).

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
SELECTION METHODS:			
22. Use of publisher/vendor advertisements, notifications	1	2	3
23. Use of professional organization/trade association networking	1	2	3
24. Use of reference guides, bibliographies, review literature	1	2	3
25. Equipment demonstrations at trade shows or other organizations	1	2	3
POLICIES:			
26. Knowledge of company's goals, mission, values for evaluating purpose, design, approach in the content of the material	1	2	3
27. Knowledge of users' needs for evaluating content, type of media, quality and effectiveness of material in meeting intended goals	1	2	3
28. Knowledge of company's existing/planned technological capabilities (computer/telecommunications) for evaluating choices of delivery methods	1	2	3
DECISION-MAKING SITUATIONS:			
29. Help from the Human Resource Training Manager in evaluating and selecting training materials	1	2	3
30. Requests for technical specifications from the corporate technology services staff before selecting delivery methods	1	2	3
32. Primary authority for evaluating and selecting training materials	1	2	3

I appreciate your time and opinions. Thank you for participating in this survey! If you lose your return envelope, please mail Questionnaire to: Michele Wood, 257 East Lincoln Ave., Columbus, OH 43214.

School of Library and Information Science
Columbus Program
(614) 292-7746

Kent STATE UNIVERSITY

January 3, 1996

RE: Bridging The Gap Between Librarians and Corporate Training

Dear Human Resource Training Manager:

Employee training and development activities within corporations have grown to include provision of remedial education and basic skills training, e.g., reading, writing, arithmetic, computer skills/applications, etc. Increasingly, this training is being done by use of distance learning technologies such as video, broadcast transmission, interactive multi-media, self-directed print materials, etc. While human resource training professionals typically administer training activities, corporate librarians can provide a valuable service in terms of locating, evaluating, selecting, and providing access to educational and training resources within the corporate library.

As a graduate student in the Kent State University School of Library and Information Science, I am conducting a survey to compare the respective policies, methods and selection criteria used by corporate librarians and human resource training managers in locating, evaluating and selecting distance learning-based educational and training resources at the remedial/basic skills level. The purpose of the study is to determine the compatibility between the processes of both groups of professionals in order to develop an effective collection in support of corporate training and development goals. **Your opinion is essential!**

The enclosed Questionnaire is **brief** (less than ten minutes of your time will be required to complete it). **Confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed**, and there is **no risk or penalty involved** in participating or withdrawing from this study (please see reverse side for details).

Your voluntary cooperation and prompt response are greatly appreciated. A stamped, self-addressed return envelope is included for your convenience.

Very truly yours,

Michele S. Wood
Graduate Student/Principal Researcher

P.S. **Please return the Questionnaire by January 17, 1996.**

124 Mount Hall, 1050 Carmack Road
Columbus, OH 43210

Bridging The Gap Between Librarians and Corporate Training is a study being conducted in partial fulfillment of my Master's degree in Library and Information Science (MLS). As the principal researcher, I will be the only person with access to the returned questionnaires. Your confidentiality is assured as neither your name nor that of your company's will be requested on the questionnaire. Return envelopes have been coded in the event that follow-up reminders become necessary; however, upon receipt of each questionnaire, the return envelope will be discarded. At the completion of the survey, the mailing list will be destroyed.

There are no apparent risks from participation in this study since your opinions are being requested anonymously, and the subject matter is not of a sensitive or proprietary nature. As indicated previously, your participation is essential to the successful completion of this study, but it is entirely voluntary. There is no penalty if you choose not to participate.

This study has been approved by Kent State University. If you have any questions regarding the questionnaire, the study itself, or results of the study, please contact me, Michele Wood, at (614) 844-6972, or my research advisor, Dr. Mary Machin, at KSU's Columbus Program Office (614) 292-7746. If you have questions related to Kent State University's rules for research, please contact Dr. M. Thomas Jones, Vice Provost and Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, at KSU's main campus, at (216) 672-2851.

QUESTIONNAIRE

The focus of this study will be on distance learning-based resources for employee education and training at the remedial education/basic skills level. The purpose of this Questionnaire is to determine the usefulness of the criteria and statements below as guidelines for developing a collection in a corporate library which will meet the needs of training managers and end-users (employees).

Remedial/basic skills training is defined as reading, writing, basic arithmetic, English as a Second Language, basic computer skills/applications, communications and problem solving.

Distance learning technologies include any method for delivery of education and training that does not involve face-to-face instruction in a traditional classroom, seminar or campus-based setting, e.g., audio/videocassettes, films, slides, workbooks, television broadcasts, computer-assisted instruction (software, multi-media CD-ROMs, videodiscs, laser disks, video or computer conferencing, etc.).

Even if you do not provide remedial/basic skills training or employ distance learning methods at the present time in your company, please answer as if you were planning to develop this type of collection. Upon completion of the questionnaire, please return it in the enclosed envelope.

Job title and type of industry are requested only for comparative purposes.

1. Job Title _____ (e.g., Corporate Librarian/ Information Specialist, or Training/Human Resource Development Manager/Specialist, etc.)

2. Type of industry in which you are employed (please circle or fill in most appropriate choice):

a. Finance/Banking
b. Insurance
c. Manufacturing
d. Communications
e. Transportation
f. Utilities
g. Other _____

Each selection criterion below is followed by a response set which offers four choices. Please circle the response which you feel best approximates your feeling about the usefuness of each criterion for evaluating distance learning-based training resources at the remedial/basic skills level (1 = Very Useful, 2 = Somewhat Useful, 3 = Unsure of Usefulness, 4 = Not Useful).

SELECTION CRITERIA:	Very Useful	Somewhat Useful	Unsure of Usefulness	Not Useful
3. Purpose/intent of the material	1	2	3	4
4. Content of material--scope, coverage	1	2	3	4
5. Organization of the material--design, approach, arrangement	1	2	3	4
6. Audience--appropriateness for target audience	1	2	3	4
7. Authority of author/publisher/producer/vendor (credibility, reliability, reputation, expertise in subject)	1	2	3	4
8. Timeliness--currency in language, fashion, roles characterized	1	2	3	4
9. Accuracy of material	1	2	3	4
10. Aesthetic qualities (illustrations, visuals, motion, editing, interface)	1	2	3	4
11. Technical qualities (binding, typography, visual/sound clarity, synchronization of audio-visual, text/graphic/audio interface)	1	2	3	4
12. Ease of use of material/delivery method	1	2	3	4
13. Amount of training required to use material/equipment	1	2	3	4
14. Amount of equipment required to use/deliver material	1	2	3	4

(Please continue on reverse side)

	Very Useful	Somewhat Useful	Unsure of Usefulness	Not Useful
15. Accessibility of material/equipment to user	1	2	3	4
16. Compatibility of material with existing equipment/system/network	1	2	3	4
17. Amount of vendor service and support available (documentation, training, previous relationship with vendor)	1	2	3	4
18. Willingness of vendor to demonstrate equipment	1	2	3	4
19. Willingness of vendor to allow pre-purchase viewing of material (approval plan, material sample or demo)	1	2	3	4
20. Material effectiveness (extent to which material achieves its intended goals–may be in terms of suitability to the collection, or in terms of meeting specified learning objectives)	1	2	3	4
21. Cost–initial and ongoing (initial costs include purchase of material/equipment, wiring, licensing, training, customizing fees; ongoing costs include replacement or upgrading of material/ equipment, connection, transmission, maintenance/repair fees.	1	2	3	4

The statements below represent methods, policies and decision-making situations that may characterize the selection process. Please indicate how important each statement is to you as a guideline for evaluating distance learning-based training material at the remedial/basic skills level. Circle the response which best approximates the importance you would assign each statement as a guideline in selecting training materials (1 = Very Important, 2 = Somewhat Important, 3 = Not Important).

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
SELECTION METHODS:			
22. Use of publisher/vendor advertisements, notifications	1	2	3
23. Use of professional organization/trade association networking	1	2	3
24. Use of reference guides, bibliographies, review literature	1	2	3
25. Equipment demonstrations at trade shows or other organizations	1	2	3
POLICIES:			
26. Knowledge of company's goals, mission, values for evaluating purpose, design, approach in the content of the material	1	2	3
27. Knowledge of users' needs for evaluating content, type of media, quality and effectiveness of material in meeting intended goals	1	2	3
28. Knowledge of company's existing/planned technological capabilities (computer/telecommunications) for evaluating choices of delivery methods	1	2	3
DECISION-MAKING SITUATIONS:			
29. Help from the Corporate Librarian in evaluating and selecting training materials	1	2	3
30. Requests for technical specifications from the corporate technology services staff before selecting delivery methods	1	2	3
32. Primary authority for evaluating and selecting training materials	1	2	3

I appreciate your time and opinions. Thank you for participating in this survey! If you lose your return envelope, please mail Questionnaire to: Michele Wood, 257 East Lincoln Ave., Columbus, OH 43214.

FOLLOW-UP POSTCARD SENT TO SELECTED SAMPLE OF NONRESPONDENTS:

1/27/96

RE: Bridging The Gap Between Librarians and Corporate Training

Dear Professional:

Please complete and return the Questionnaire regarding the above-named study sent to you on January 3, 1996. It is probably still on your desk and will only take a short time to complete and mail. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Michele S. Wood
Principal Researcher

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Signature: Michele S. Wood	Position:
Printed Name: MICHELE S. WOOD	Organization:
Address: 257 E. LINCOLN AVE. COLUMBUS, OH 43214	Telephone Number: (614) 844-6972
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