Job opportunities for librarians in 21st century
Helena Ondriasova
Department of Library and Information Science, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia

Background
Several objective circumstances do not allow all the graduates from Schools of Librarianship and Information Science or Studies (LIS) start to work in a library or an archive. Despite this fact the LIS graduates are prepared well enough to find their first jobs somewhere else.

The aim of this poster is to introduce job opportunities suitable for the LIS graduates which are not in libraries or archives. A traffic light analogy is used to emphasize degree of use of knowledge and skills acquired within the LIS study in praxis. This could help the LIS graduates to orient at the job market.

Methods
To find out the real situation about LIS School graduates working application a questionnaire survey was realized. Fourteen respondents returned filled questionnaires. The answers helped us identify four main job areas where the graduates start their career. See figure below.

Results

Administrative jobs

Job names: administrative worker, team assistant, office assistant, office manager, legal secretary, marketing support etc.

Job characteristics: active work with people, multiskilling, low perspective of promotion etc.

You use probably less than 10% of knowledge gained within your study.

Who does this?

Jane (23) “My first job after the graduation was office manager in private medical company. I was responsible for managing the fluent course of office and colleagues’ business trips, invoicing, work with documents, communication with clients, supplies and lawyers. I used the knowledge of the management of document files and practical skills of work in Excel and Access.”

Consultant jobs

Job names: personal consultant or recruiter, financial consultant, project coordinator etc.

Job characteristics: works success depends on many people, active communication with people, international background, reporting, deadlines, profit orientation, very good promotion possibility etc.

You use probably between 10 and 30% of knowledge gained within your study.

Who does this?

Linda (26) “I work as recruiter in international personal agency since August 2008. I use the knowledge of the information system theory, which helps me to understand the specifics of IT positions like programmer, database tester, web developer etc. I think that the skill of information retrieval enables me to search information faster and more relevant than my colleagues.”

IT jobs

Job names: data management specialist, processing agent, software sales representative, web designer, web architect etc.

Job characteristics: multicultural and multinational teams, part of puzzle, fast promotion possibility, variety of jobs from unqualified to expert, contact with the most modern technologies etc.

You use probably between 30 and 50% of knowledge gained within your study.

Who does this?

Agnes (26) “I started to work in local software company in May 2007. I work as web designer and web applications developer. I appreciate mainly the knowledge how recognize the information value and validity. Internet browsing, presentation skills, project preparation and theory from courses like WWW, HTML, XML – Electronic Information Sources.”

Summary
It is documented that librarianship draws people from a vast range of backgrounds (more in the article Raised by Wolves by James G. Neal in Library Journal 2/15/2006). Decision for a second career in a library can have more reasons. Four of ten respondents working out of library are open to library job or at least to some kind of cooperation (the result is due to our questionnaires).

Acknowledgement
I am grateful them who gave me comments on earlier versions of the poster. I also appreciate willingness of respondents who decided to participate in the questionnaire survey.

Contact information
Helena Ondriasova
Comenius University in Bratislava
Department of LIS
Safarikovo square 6, 818 01 Bratislava, Slovakia
Phone: +421 902 297 856
E-mail: ondriasova.uniba@gmail.com
www.uniba.sk