

LIBRARY STAFF

L. No.	Title of the Lesson	Skills	Activity
16A.	Library Staff	Desire to serve the library users, Analytical thinking, Initiative and Independent Judgement, Marketing skills, ICT skills	Responding to Queries, Advising and Assisting library users, Shelve management, Classification, Cataloguing, and arrangement of library materials, Equipment handling

Summary

Library staff or library professionals are involved in all library operations at all the levels. They may manage the libraries or may contribute towards some specialised activity of the library. They may be engaged in routine activities or supervise and direct other staff members.

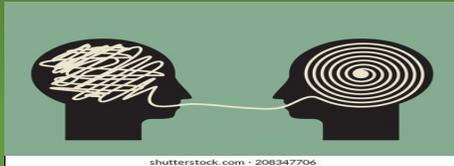
As you are aware, library is a service oriented organisation and their main focus is user satisfaction. Thus the libraries need staff for running their activities and operations. The staff is recruited to work at various levels of the libraries.

Library staff members have always been donning several roles as they act as managers, promoters, partners, educators and leaders depending on the work situation.

Different categories of staff, at various levels, are required to operate several functions of a library. In this lesson, you will learn the processes involved in building staff strength of a library.

Principal Points

- The human resources are considered as the most valuable of all resources that have the potential to transform all other resources into tangible products and services.
- Staffing is an element of management that builds up the manpower strength of any organization.
- The three levels of staff are: Top, Middle and Lower level.
- The different categories of library staff are: Professional, Semi-professional, Non-professional and Supporting staff.
- Staffing involves a series of steps such as manpower planning, recruitment and selection, employment and induction, roles and responsibilities of persons in different positions, performance appraisal, staff training and development that includes continuing education.
- Induction is necessary to introduce the new staff to their co-workers, superiors and to the other staff of the library. This is to make them feel at home in their new environment.
- Office functions takes care of all administrative and financial functions of the organization



Build your Understanding

The factors influencing the role of library staff in modern libraries are:

- Changing social requirements
- Need for improved access for information
- Creation of literate environment
- Emerging technologies
- Digital information environment
- Information explosion
- Changing user behavior
- Increased technological needs
- Changing image of libraries and library staff

What's



1. Commitment to the library profession is the chief requirement for all library professionals. This is possible only by continuing education, regular attendance at conferences/seminars/symposia and advocating the profession.
2. Every library professional should have excellent communication skills. These include speaking, writing, listening, understanding and conveying to others.
3. Innovation is also a must. This includes applying imagination for the purpose of devising solutions to problems and designing new methods and procedures when previous ones do not bring in good results.
4. Marketing is another skill every staff member should acquire as it helps to promote sources, services, and facilities of library to a variety of users.



Library staff provides essential services for schools, colleges, universities and communities. Students and other people go to libraries for free, reliable, well-organised access to books, the Internet and other sources of information and entertainment.

The library staff helps users in the research, reference assistance, material for children, seniors, community and other user groups with specific needs.

Electronic media, computer use and Internet access are an increasing component of library materials and services. It is only with the capability of the library staff that library users are able to access the materials in the modern setting.

While specific roles and responsibilities may change depending on the size and setting of the libraries, librarian and other library professionals' main role is to help users find information and conduct their educational and other pursuits.

It is interesting to know that several studies have revealed that almost 75 % of the library staff is women.

Extend your Horizon

Visit one university library and a college library. Meet 2-3 senior staff members of the library. From them, know about the :

- Staff strength
- Levels of library staff
- Categories of library staff
- Staff training and development

Record your findings about both the libraries and prepare a comparative account of the same.

Evaluate Yourself

1. Elucidate the three levels of management.
2. What are the various categories of library staff ?
3. Explain the importance of induction in libraries.
4. List the different forms of staff training.
5. Which are the different forms of library staff training ?