



## REPORT TO THE LIBRARY BOARD

**MEETING DATE: Wednesday, February 20, 2008**

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| Session:           | Public Session   |
| Subject:           | Human Resources & Organizational Effectiveness Update                |
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| Presented By:      | Anne Baker   |
| Purpose of Report: | For Receipt and Information Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

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### Recommendation

It is recommended that this report be received.

### Issue / Opportunity

In alignment with our strategic plan and the development of a high performance culture to support its achievement, key projects were initiated by the Human Resources & Organizational Effectiveness department in 2007. This report provides an overview of the activities.

### Update

#### Core Competency Model

Core competencies can be defined as the skills, knowledge and personal characteristics that all employees are required to exhibit in their roles. Employees are an organization's greatest asset and core competencies are strategically significant because they drive behavior leading to peak performance. The right core competencies are essential because they are central to all human resource management activities:

- Recruitment
- Employee Selection
- Compensation
- Performance Appraisal
- Training & Development
- Succession Planning

Core competencies were first introduced into the London Public Library several years ago. Since their inception much has changed: the Library developed a new mission, vision, strategic plan, a "Customers First" philosophy and focus, new processes and structures, and is in the process of embedding a new culture. Therefore, it was critical to ensure alignment of the core

competency model with the changed internal and external environment and to develop a plan to ensure that these new core competencies would be truly entrenched in the organization. A project team, formed to review, develop and implement a new core competency model, identified eight new core competencies that all London Public Library employees must demonstrate:

- I am a continuous learner.
- I am customer-focused.
- I am a cooperative and collaborative team player.
- I am emotionally mature.
- I am an effective communicator.
- I am continually improving and innovating.
- I am a high achiever.
- I am a leader.

In order to provide clarity around individual competencies for employees, the team also developed sets of six to seven behavioural indicators for each competency. Behavioural indicators illustrate what effective performance looks like by describing observable and measurable actions, activities and conduct. For example, behavioural indicators for the core competency "I am customer-focused" are:

- I understand and anticipate my customers' needs and reach out, going above and beyond, to delight my customers by providing exceptional customer experiences each and every time.
- I take personal accountability for customer satisfaction by putting customers' needs first in my daily tasks, planning and decision-making.
- I am sensitive to the differing needs, expectations, skills and abilities of the customer and provide the best possible service to accommodate these differences.
- I treat the customer with courtesy and respect and use each interaction as an opportunity to nurture a lifelong relationship with the Library.
- I welcome customer feedback and draw on it when I introduce new policies, programs, processes and services, and when I am evaluating current practices.
- I use fact and reason to balance the expectation of different customers and stakeholders in order to reach "win-win" solutions.

The new core competency model was rolled out to staff at all levels through a series of 38 information sessions at various Library locations. Employees were also encouraged to participate in an Intranet forum discussion. In January, 2008 a self-led, 8-module e-learning training program incorporating relevant articles, quizzes and tasks was developed and launched to enable employees to learn more about each competency and self-assess their performance in the competency. As job descriptions continue to be updated, the new core competencies will be incorporated into them.

## **Performance Management System**

With the introduction of new core competencies it was also necessary to ensure that the Library's performance management system was aligned to, and supported, the further development of these core competencies among current employees at all levels of the organization.

### Coaching Program

Employees who are preparing for, or taking on, the role of Supervisor in the Library system participate in 24 hours of Supervisory Skills Training. This is delivered in-house by the Manager, Training & Development, usually on a one-to-one basis. Coaching of employees is a part of this training. With the introduction of new core competencies and a new performance appraisal process, further development in the area of coaching was essential. In mid-

December, a full one-day training session was delivered to 32 Supervisors, Managers and Directors. Facilitated by an external consultant, this excellent, interactive session provided solid context for the importance of employee coaching as a key part of the leader's role, as well as opportunities for practice through role-playing. Attendees have been encouraged to form peer coaching triads to share ideas on how to deal with coaching issues, practice through role-playing with each other and provide general peer-to-peer support through this coaching buddy system in addition to accessing the Human Resources department for assistance.

### Performance Appraisal Process

Annual performance appraisals have been conducted on employees in the past using a variety of forms and with varying degrees of success. A new and comprehensive performance appraisal process that incorporates the new core competencies has been developed. This process includes the use of a:

- Performance Evaluation Form
- Employee Self-Evaluation Form: This is new process to the organization.
- 360 Feedback Form: Input gathered from direct reports, peers and others who work frequently to be used for Supervisor level and up. This is a new process for Supervisors, having been introduced to senior management in 2006.

This process has been introduced to Supervisors, Managers and Directors and a full day of training will delivered in late February.

### **Training / Employee Development Update**

In 2007, the Training Plan highlighted the technological advances made by LPL staff, both in the number of e-learning opportunities and the application of those technologies to the information service process. A Technology Fair in April highlighted social networking with sessions on blogs, and Web 2.0 familiarization. Internal supports were highlighted in sessions offered by IT staff on troubleshooting workstations, using the wireless network and learning with Atomic Learning (the online training site). New collection formats were assimilated: downloadable MP3, Netlibrary, electronic databases and the nature of new web features (blogs, RSS, podcasts) had to be understood.

Many more staff were able to take advantage of library-specific training programs offered by external sources: Southern Ontario Library Service workshops, Education Institute seminars and webinars, vendors of electronic databases, among them. Employees also attended a number of community agency workshops and conferences and brought back ideas learned to LPL.

The Staff Development Day, branded as **Leaping Forward**, focused on customer service. Workshops provided ideas related to *Service in Person* (communication skills), *Virtual Service* (web site and social networking), *Service in Writing* (clear writing for publicity and education purposes) and *The Service Environment* (processes and space decisions that create service barriers). An external speaker delivered an excellent presentation on customer service. We also heard from one of our customers about the difficulty for newcomers in understanding what a library is in Canada and what it offers.

During 2007, more than 3100 participants attended training on 51 different topics. The Manager of Training & Development delivered 92 training sessions personally. Broadly, those topics included:

- Human Resources Initiatives: Job Evaluation, Core Competencies introduction, Cultural Renewal
- Health and Safety: wellness programs, WHMIS, MSDS database orientation
- Reference, Readers' Advisory and Referral Service: Basic reference skills, a wide variety of workshops on specific topics, collections resources, business

- Microsoft Office Applications
- Lending Services: Millennium, collection agency processes
- Technology
- Web Services: AskON, web site, changes to the online catalogue, LIBBI
- Personal Skills Development: Supervisory skills training, leadership training, presentation skills, critical thinking skills
- Diversity: Participation in a number of community events, services to the socially excluded
- Community Development: Generative relationships, connecting with Schools

The goal of transitioning to appropriate forms of e-learning was realized, with staff participating in self-directed training modules and webinars. It will be a goal in 2008 to develop improved tracking of training metrics, currently a manual process. In 2008, we are undertaking a needs assessment survey as part of the development of the 2008 Training Plan. Part of that assessment is a review of the effectiveness of various training formats based on the learning style preferences of library staff.