

RESPONSES TO THE METRONET SURVEY ON CONTINUING EDUCATION NEEDS IN MINNESOTA LIBRARIES

On behalf of Metronet and the College of St Catherine's Department of Information Management, we want to thank all 445 librarians and library support staff who responded to our recent online survey. The response has been truly extraordinary and we are so grateful not only for the responses to our questions but also for the many comments and ideas that were offered. What follows is a summary of the survey responses.

With regard to the question on statewide interest in a certificate program in library leadership, 63 percent of respondents indicated a moderate to high interest level, while 83 percent indicated a moderate to high interest in taking additional courses related to improving job performance or increasing one's subject specialization.

The survey listed eight courses which happen to be part of the College's certificate program in organizational leadership. These courses are listed below along with indications of interest levels (0= no interest, 5=high interest).

	1	2	3	4	5
Personnel Management	19.1%	16.1%	21.7%	26.8%	16.3%
Strategic Communication	14.2	14.6	21.6	31.8	17.9
Leading Teams & Projects	12.5	14.6	21.3	30.6	20.9
Accounting & Finance Skills For Decision-making	20.3	18.6	23.8	21.4	15.9
Marketing Strategically	13.3	15.1	24.7	29.5	17.4
Leading Organizational Change	14.6	10.9	21.5	31.3	21.8
Ethics and Leadership	14.6	15.8	27.8	26.9	14.8
Organizations: Social & Political Structures	17.3	18.0	26.6	22.9	15.2

The questions on whether employers would support continuing education by providing employees time off with pay, or would cover tuition costs revealed that one-third of respondents believed that time off with pay was not an option and 41 percent believed that tuition reimbursement was similarly very unlikely. Approximately 16 percent indicated that they simply did not know what their employers' position was on these questions.

Slightly more than two-thirds of respondents hold MLS degrees, and 63 percent have 11 or more years of library work experience.

With regard to the types of courses preferred by survey respondents, the range and diversity of responses was so broad as to prevent a complete description. Nevertheless, certain themes clearly emerged. Since respondents were permitted to suggest multiple courses, the results that follow indicate RESPONSES, not RESPONDENTS. Receiving the most “votes” were courses in technology, including the management of technological change, Web2.0, and similar topics. Other areas receiving significant interest were library leadership including advocacy, new business skills, team building and professional ethics. Twenty-nine responses fell in this category, and 29 responses focused on courses in the area of finance, accounting and budgeting. Other subjects receiving double-digit “votes” included human resources/personnel management (25), strategic communication and marketing (18), working with governing boards and government agencies (13), and project management (12). While there is a good deal of overlap among some of these categories, it is interesting to note the strong interest in organizational leadership especially if one combines the 29 responses in this category with the 25 responses focused on human resources and personnel management. This would suggest that the College’s certificate program in organizational leadership (www.stkate.edu/maol) would be an effective way of meeting these needs. Look for the College of St Catherine’s Information Science Department to launch a certificate program in library leadership in late summer.

In conclusion, we want to thank the library community for taking the time to respond to our survey, and Metronet for generously posting the survey and collecting the responses.