

How health and information libraries could benefit from the sharing of personal competencies: a cross-fertilization which might be mutually beneficial

Authors:

Patricia Merrikin, Federica Napolitani, Gabriel Stergiou and Margaret Zito; Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Settore Attività Editoriali and FAO, Roma, Italy.

Summary: One of the main key words of our contemporary era of technology and information, globalization and social interaction is certainly: sharing. To be ready to face and cope with the complexity of our work realities, we desperately need to share all sorts of information, data, experiences, technical support, devices, software, standards, etc. But, after all, these elements that we would like to share are but the production of the human mind and the creativity of individual subject matter experts. Therefore why not promoting the sharing of knowledge not through resources or services but by moving individuals and by increasing staff mobility even for a limited time period. At first, the tendency was to share data by aggregating databases, web resources, online services into clusters, hubs, portals, one-stop shopping platforms. Then, the advent of Web 2.0 technology showed the pressing need to share something more than that and to facilitate inter-personal communication, enhance collaborative creativity and social networking. Now the tendency is to deepen the same concept of sharing which could become more suitable to the present time and more adequate to better fulfil the complexity of the tasks that we are all facing, if it involves the transferring of a person on his/her entirety.

The sharing of experts between institutions is certainly not a novel idea, but something to rediscover in today's world where innovation is developing at such rhythm that it is getting more and more difficult to keep pace with it. These sorts of exchanges are acquiring increasing popularity among the young generation, just think of the success of the Erasmus programme, which is followed each year by an increasing number of academic students and is part of the EU Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013 which support exchanges and connections between people, institutions and countries.

The poster will focus on the benefits of sharing of personnel and briefly describe a collaboration between the Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS, Rome) and the David Lubin Library of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO, Rome). In particular, the experience of a visiting expert from ISS to FAO will be reported