

WINDOW ON PRACTICE



Analysing the environment at Queensland University of Technology Library in Australia

Stokker and Hallam (2009) identify change as the main driver for the Library's engagement with workforce planning. They believed environmental scanning was a key part of the process to explore trends impacting on libraries, the context, and trends within libraries. The scanning was carried out over twelve months and involved reading relevant documents and inviting guest specialist speakers to address library staff. All library staff were involved in the scanning process and five key areas were investigated, each led by a member of the senior library team:

- Higher education sector/government policy
- Teaching and learning
- Client service
- Research
- Information resources and scholarly information.

Several trends emerged that would impact on the faculty liaison service, such as the university's desire to gain a higher research profile by increasing the number of researchers and research students. This led to the development of three workforce planning strategies for the faculty liaison service: methods to allow librarians to specialise in research support or academic skills support; a review of the job classification scheme allowing librarians to progress further in recognition of their specialist work; and the design of a development programme to allow liaison librarians to acquire new skills and knowledge.

In addition to staff involvement in environmental scanning they were also represented in the workforce planning party and planning strategies were built using consultation. These methods were used to encourage staff ownership and engagement.

Source: Stokker, J. and Hallam, G. (2009) 'The right person, in the right job, with the right skills at the right time: A workforce-planning model that goes beyond metrics', *Library Management*, Vol. 15, No. 89, pp. 561–71.



ACTIVITY 5.1

Consider the external environment, for any organisation in which you are involved, for three to five years ahead. Individually, or as a group, identify all the important environmental influences and select the six most important ones. Identify the challenges these present to the organisation in achieving its goals and how the organisation could respond. Write a summary (one side of A4) of what you think your organisation's priorities should be in the people area over the next three to five years.