



Submission in respect of the role of school librarians

I have been involved in Information Systems management since 1989 and have watched with a keen eye as the global economy has become increasingly based around information skills and knowledge.

I recognised early in my career that hiring the *right* people was the key to success in any business, especially information systems: people that are self motivated to keep on learning (self-learning) new products and technologies in this rapidly changing industry. I prefer to hire someone with a good attitude of self-development rather than a person with all the paper qualifications, but lacking that ability and motivation to keep on learning. The Australian economy has become too focussed on sending employees for training just so they can get a piece of paper with a tick in the box saying they have been trained on this product/technology; but the employee may still be a long way from being a useful and productive member.

Thus I believe that the most important thing that children can be taught at school is the ability (and willingness and eagerness) to self-learn and keep up-to-date with new developments. Traditionally it has been the role of the Teacher Librarian to teach Information Skills – how to find good reliable resources, how to use these in research, self-learning, evaluating and processing information. While all teachers (at all stages) *should* be involved in teaching Information Skills and encouraging this mindset, practical realities of teaching syllabus content in order to achieve satisfactory academic results and pass-rates often means that teaching information skills can be overlooked.

Thus I want to add my strongest recommendation, from someone quite outside of the school educational sector, that top priority should be given, on a national scale, to the development of Information Skills.

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