Being an Accidental Technology Trainer

*There is nothing training cannot do. Nothing is
above its reach, it can turn bad morals to good; it
can destroy bad principles and recreate good ones;
it can lift men to angelship.*

—Mark Twain

If you are like most library technology trainers, you were never taught how to train in school—or even when you began your first library position. So, you were probably surprised when you found out that your work responsibilities would include technology training, whether this meant formal classes in a computer lab or informal assistance while leaning over a patron's library monitor. You aren't alone.

What Is an Accidental Technology Trainer?

Does being an accidental technology trainer mean that you teach classes in a computer lab? What if you teach online? Or create self-paced tutorials? Or just help someone set up an e-mail account? All of these activities constitute training. You might work in a public, school, academic, or special library. You might train library staff members, students, and/or the public. You could be a volunteer. You may have an MLS, or you might not. The common factor is simply that you didn't plan to do technology training in your library career.

If you have helped someone use Word, showed someone how to find a book in the online catalog, or shared tips on how to improve storytime, you've been a trainer. You helped someone learn. A trainer helps direct the growth of learners by helping them become competent or proficient in a skill or task. Trainers use coaching, instructing, and facilitating techniques to accomplish learning objectives.

A skillful trainer makes it easier for learners to learn by attempting to discover what a participant is interested in knowing, then determining the best way to make that information available by providing the appropriate knowledge, activities, or materials. This is done by listening, asking questions, providing ideas, suggesting alternatives, and identifying possible resources.

How Did This Accident Happen?

When libraries need to select someone on staff to provide technology training, they naturally look to those with an interest in technology. Many accidental technology trainers fell into the role because they knew more about technology than their library co-workers, or even because they were the youngest staff members and thus assumed to be proficient in technology. In effect, these librarians were asked to take on the role of trainer simply because they were viewed as technology experts. Another group of accidental technology trainers fell into the role because they were enthusiastic about technology and wanted to share their knowledge and excitement with others. (This latter group might initially be more successful and happy with their accidental status!)

Successful technology training, though, has less to do with technical knowledge than with other abilities such as listening skills, patience, enthusiasm, and sympathy toward learners struggling with new technologies. Knowing how to train is more useful than just having technical expertise. I once sat on a panel of technology

trainers who were giving a workshop for librarians. The three other panelists surely proved they knew what they were talking about, but the participants learned very little, because most didn't understand the terminology. Sometimes, keeping training simple and relevant is the most important thing you can do.

I became an accidental library technology trainer while working as an academic copy cataloger during library school. We started to use e-mail for the first time, and I was selected as Department E-mail Trainer. This first accidental technology training responsibility mainly involved one-on-one, just-in-time coaching. My first real training gig, however, was providing in-service training for a group of schoolteachers. Back in the mid-90s, I showed them the Internet for the first time—using the text-based Lynx browser! I am sure none of us realized then the real implications of what was to come.

My first professional library job was with the library automation company Sirsi (now SirsiDynix). The company's philosophy at the time (1997) was that it would rather hire someone who knew libraries and then teach them the technology, than hire someone who knew technology and then try to teach them about libraries. I thought that was rather brilliant. The library staff I trained appreciated examples that meant something to them and that I really understood their work and processes. By the time I began work for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in 1999, I was no longer training accidentally, but this was the first time I received real instruction on being a trainer.

Curious about how the accident occurred for other library technology trainers? I interviewed some expert trainers and created an online survey to collect advice and details from a wide range of accidental library technology trainers. (A copy of the survey questions and information on the experts is included in Appendixes A and B.) It is quite inspiring to see how many library technology

trainers got their start and their clear love of learning, technology, and sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm.

I asked trainers why they do technology training and received all kinds of answers:

- Someone asked me how to get an e-mail account.
- I'm young and enthusiastic.
- I was the most qualified.
- I was tagged "it."
- I just got my MLS, so they think I know technology.
- I knew how to turn the computer on.
- My boss made me.

Survey Question: How Did You Become a Library Technology Trainer?

Brenda Hough, Technology Coordinator, Northeast Kansas Library System, Lawrence (KS) – "It was 1996, and I was a reference librarian at the Detroit Lakes Public Library, MN. We were newly automated and had just started offering public access to the Internet. I started out doing one-to-one training on the fly. We soon realized the need for more structured training and soon we were regularly offering classes for the public. It's been a part of my professional work ever since that time."

Scott Hines, Reference Librarian, Pacific Graduate School of Psychology, Palo Alto (CA) – "I became a technology trainer because I was doing technology work, but also loved teaching others about technology and helping others to use technology

more effectively, and the need was great among faculty, staff, and other librarians."

Meredith Farkas, Distance Learning Librarian, Norwich University, Northfield (VT) – "It certainly wasn't my intention. I was interested in playing with technology and creating applications for the profession, but I never thought that I would be a very effective teacher. I started getting asked to give talks on the topics I knew a lot about, and I started to realize that I was good at teaching librarians about technology and that I really enjoyed it. I had always been uncomfortable with public speaking, so this realization was a big surprise to me."

Anonymous – "I pursued it. It is important to bring as many people as possible into the information loop."

Max Anderson, Educational Services Librarian, SOLINET, Atlanta (GA) – "While I was attending Florida State University's School of Information, I heard through another student about interviews for computer trainer positions at what was known then as the Gates Center for Technology Access (GCTA). I interviewed and was hired to be a Public Access Computer Trainer. Very soon after, the company merged with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. I spent 3½ years traveling around the country installing computing technology in rural public libraries and training the staff how to use the technology, so they would know how to teach their patrons how to use the technology. I did not really know anything about technology before I started working with the Gates Foundation—everything I learned was through on-the-job training and internal training."

Anonymous – "I was an adult services librarian in a public library that decided to start offering basic computer instruction to the public. I was interested."

Sarah Houghton-Jan, Information and Web Services Manager, San Mateo County Library, San Mateo (CA) – "My first job out of library school was as an eServices Librarian for a county library system in California where part of my duties was to train on technology. Literally, the day I got there, I was told that they would be launching a timeout system on all of their public computers in three weeks, and that I needed to coordinate installation, integration, and staff and patron training in that time. So, let's say I became a technology trainer through a crash course from Hades. I had lots of previous training and teaching experience, so it wasn't a far stretch, but the technology training part of it was completely new to me before this position. Throughout my time there I learned how to best train on technology, and how it really is quite different than training on other topics. Now I train for my full-time job and as a consultant for InfoPeople, a nonprofit California group dedicated to training library staff throughout the state, mostly on technology."

Anonymous – "My position was created as part of an LSTA grant."

Helene Blowers, Technology Director, Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County, Charlotte (NC) – "I started as the library's first staff trainer back in 1996, right after the library began installing public access Internet PCs across the system. Prior to my arrival, staff did not have a technology

resource on staff to assist them in gaining new skills that were required in the digital world."

Bernadette Rivard, Supervisor of Technical Services, Milford Town Library, Milford (MA) – "Our library's long range plan had a goal of offering technology training to the public. I applied for an LSTA Information Literacy Grant to meet that goal."

Anonymous – "I went to library school because it was moving into information technologies. I learned Web design, etc. while getting my MLS. Innovations and tools excite me so I want to share with others how they can be more efficient or have more fun!"

Mindy Johnson, Head of Adult Services, Camden County Library, Voorhees (NJ) – "I was hired as the 'Customer Education Librarian' in 2002, and the main part of my job was developing and teaching classes. Now, my position has changed, but I'm still teaching quite often."

Anonymous – "I became a technology trainer accidentally … a couple of my techier friends and I decided in January 2005 that we should give a brown bag that explained some common techie terms impacting libraries (cookies, proxy server, OpenURL, etc.). We called our presentation: 'What's a cookie, and why do I care if I can't eat it?' We got such a good turnout that we were asked to give it again and continued giving brown bags (approximately monthly) on PC or computer related topics."

Susannah Violino, Reference Librarian, Norwalk Public Library, Norwalk (CT) – "Reference librarians offer classes for the public."

Erin James, Library Associate, Gwinnett County Public Library, Lilburn (GA) – "By default and in self-defense! I help out at my branch only. I had previously worked as an administrative assistant, so my MS Office skills are relatively advanced. In the last few months, the system has moved to MS SharePoint—the people I work with are boggled, so I get to translate and train. Also, my bosses were so amazed that I had my own personal wiki for keeping track of staff development [that] I think they decided I must be an expert. Out of fairness, though, I should note that I was an English major and have absolutely no formal technology training. I love my computer and the Internet, so I've self-taught a lot over the years, and I enjoy finding answers to new questions."

Mary Bucher Ross, training consultant, former manager of Staff Development, Seattle Public Library, Seattle (WA) – "My path into training and staff development was such an amazing fluke. I was registered to attend a Washington Library Association conference on the Internet in 1996 (in the really early days of Web access in public libraries). One of the presenters got sick and had to cancel at the last minute, and the conference committee asked me and a co-worker, Pat Grace, to take over his programs. At that time I had a few public Web access computers at the branch library where I was the manager and had done a number of classes on Web resources for teachers, seniors, community groups, etc. In the audience at the conference was

Susan Turner, director of continuing library education at the University of Washington (UW). She phoned me after the conference and asked me to teach a class for the UW Continuing Ed program for library practitioners. I ended up teaching four classes over a two-year period. Then, Seattle Public Library asked me to create a training program on Internet reference for its staff. That led to work with the Washington State Library and to my current involvement in staff training and development."

Michael Porter, Community Associate, WebJunction, Seattle (WA) – "Almost immediately in my first libary job in 1990 I was called on to informally train co-workers on basic computer use using our GEAC system. 'Accidental' really is the operative word here. 'Convenient' also comes to mind. It was really quite convenient for my library to use me for these training sessions. Having someone very comfortable with computers, who understood what buttons to push and why, was a less common skill set then than it has become today. The fact that I enjoyed helping folks get comfortable with the new technology was a happy convergence of these things; an accidental bit of convenient serendipity, you might say."

Is It a Happy Accident?

Training has always been my favorite part of any job. It helps people, and it is exciting! As Robert Rosania wrote in *The Credible Trainer*, "One reason expressed countless times by many in the [training] profession is that training truly offers the potential to touch the hearts and minds of those people they serve."[1] This reminds me of librarianship. When I talk to people who work in libraries and ask them why they were initially attracted to the field,

many say that it was because of their love of books and reading. But, when I ask them what they love most about their jobs, the most common responses mention the people they assist and their library's community. Though the inanimate book may have attracted them to library work, the people make the job rewarding and fulfilling.

Through training, you help people learn new skills, improve their performance with using a computer, and even show them new tools and fun social networking communities. This is a satisfying job, both professionally and personally. Technology trainer Michael Porter talks about the enjoyment training brings him:

> I taught my first "official" public technology class in 1996 (while working at the Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana). The ambitious title of that 90-minute long class was "Internet for Beginners." I remember being more excited about the content than nervous about teaching the class. This excitement has helped training stay fresh for me, more than a decade later. It's also an important point for folks that think they might want to pursue training as a large part of their career. Many years ago, when I complained about my job being boring or monotonous (pre-library, of course!), my grandma would say: "Well, that's why they call it work. They don't call it fun!" It's true that there are many "nose to the grindstone" tasks we need to accomplish. However, grandma also used to tell me that if I could find work that would allow me to get excited about going to the office in the morning, I would be doing pretty well. For me, when it comes to training and presentation, I get that excitement. I think it is important to recognize that, in order to be successful and happy with any work, some of our personal psychological needs must be met by that

work. It is satisfying psychologically to help, to be recognized by the student/learner community as a useful part of their existence. Not to put too fine a point on this issue, but this is a motivator both from the student and teacher perspective. It certainly is a huge part of why I still enjoy teaching, training, and presenting today. Seeing that flash of, "Oh yeah, this is cool, I can really use this!" across someone's face while you help them learn is a joyful experience that appeals to the psychology of both parties involved in the learning transaction. I can't imagine that ever just being "work," and these positive responses motivate me to strive to always improve the quality of my work and skills.

How Do Traditional Library Skills Translate into Training Skills?

Accidental library technology trainers often discover that their existing library skills translate quite well to training. Many librarians seem to be natural trainers, as training has a lot to do with customer service and fulfilling the information needs of the participants. A background in reference skills, information organization, programming (including summer reading, reader's advisory, adult programming, or children's activities), knowledge of resources, online searching and evaluation, information-seeking behaviors, and/or project planning can be useful.

Why Should Libraries Provide Technology Training?

We face the vital need to offer technology training in libraries; basic computer skills really matter. Many jobs, whether entry-level

Transferable Skills

When asked how traditional library skills translate into training skills, the accidental technology trainers surveyed reinforced the idea that librarians are natural trainers. Comments included:

Sarah Houghton-Jan, Information and Web Services Manager, San Mateo County Library, San Mateo (CA) – "Patience, thoroughness, and organization are three stereotypical librarian skills that are quite useful for technology training as well. In fact, without them, you won't be much of a tech trainer at all."

Anonymous – "I conduct what are essentially reference interviews to determine the needs of my trainees, especially when doing 'Just in Time' or 'training on demand.' I naturally need to use my reference skills to gather good information and organizational skills to maintain training records."

Scott Hines, Reference Librarian, Pacific Graduate School of Psychology, Palo Alto (CA) – "I'd say that the primary skills from traditional library work that I use in technology training are reference interviewing and information literacy instruction. Information literacy instruction directly translates into technology training, of course, since it involves helping students to understand how they can use technology to get what they want and need. Reference interviewing is a particularly helpful skill in technology training because it helps tremendously in doing a quick needs assessment to find out

exactly what the students need to know to accomplish their goals with technology."

Colleen Eggett, Training Coordinator, Utah State Library, Salt Lake City (UT) – "The traditional skills of how to research, how to find the information you are seeking, information literacy, the reference interview, and other topics I learned in library school remain the framework for what I teach."

Anonymous – "Most times, these tech tools are just tools to better a job or reach new users. For example, reaching more users can be done via MySpace, IM, podcasting, blogging, etc."

Brenda Hough, Technology Coordinator, Northeast Kansas Library System, Lawrence (KS) – "In each class, my goal is for each individual to gain something, to increase [his or her] conceptual understanding, or to resolve a question or area of confusion. I think it's somewhat like being a reference librarian and working with people as they do research. You assess where they are at and where they want to be, and then you help them move in that direction."

Anonymous – "The reference interview is always handy. What do people really want? Ask."

Meredith Farkas, Distance Learning Librarian, Norwich University, Northfield (VT) – "I think just about everything you do as a public services librarian involves instruction, though a lot of it is on a one-on-one basis. We're often teaching individual patrons how to do research in the databases,

how to use the catalog, how to find something at the library, how to print, and much more. We're all about sharing information and helping people find the information they need. We are so used to sharing, that sharing what we know in a training situation comes quite naturally."

Mary Bucher Ross, training consultant, Seattle (WA) – "I was a children's librarian in a previous life, and that work was a wonderful preparation for training adults. The same principles of interaction that you use in storytimes work for adults who need to be involved in their own learning. If you can keep the attention of 15 three-year-olds for 30 minutes, you can be a trainer! Reference interview skills—open questioning techniques, non-verbal encouragers, clarification, and follow-up—are really skills for effective facilitation. If we truly believe that our role is to be facilitators of learning, rather than dispensers of wisdom, then we need to use open questions to promote reflective thinking … and not be afraid of silence."

Chris Peters, Information Technology Specialist, Washington State Library, Olympia (WA) – "Librarians are skilled at translating esoteric specialized knowledge into a general language that patrons understand. This is what trainers do as well. Patience and an ability to listen are crucial to both trainers and librarians."

or advanced, require some level of computer literacy. People of all socioeconomic backgrounds need to use e-mail, participate in Web-based training, or get online to apply for a job. Technology use isn't optional anymore; it's important in all areas of life. We

can't ignore technology within the library, either. Library staff members all use computers and need the basic skills to support the day-to-day technology functions required by their jobs; technology impacts every library service we offer.

Technology has changed our expectations of what an educated person must know and be able to do in order to effectively participate in society. In 1983, *Time Magazine* named the computer "Man of the Year." In 2007, *Time*'s person of the year was YOU—due to the use of new social networking online tools. This evolution demonstrates a fundamental cultural shift. It is interesting to look back and read *Time*'s January 3, 1983, article, "The Computer Moves In," which talks about the new phenomenon of home computer use. Telecommuting is discussed and summarized as lacking the social interaction that humans crave. Companies that had tried letting employees work from home discovered that they "felt isolated, deprived of their social lives around the water cooler."[2]

Twenty-four years later, "*Time*'s Person of the Year: You" shows a dramatic shift in the use and view of technology:

> It's a story about community and collaboration on a scale never seen before. It's about the cosmic compendium of knowledge Wikipedia and the million-channel people's network YouTube and the online metropolis MySpace. It's about the many wresting power from the few and helping one another for nothing and how that will not only change the world, but also change the way the world changes. This is an opportunity to build a new kind of international understanding, not politician to politician, great man to great man, but citizen to citizen, person to person.[3]

More and more of our social interaction is moving online. We no longer just experience the digital divide; we now have to address technocultural isolation. Addressing this problem depends less on

the technology and more on providing the skills and content that will be most beneficial. The Pew Internet & American Life Project (www.pewinternet.org) provides some useful statistics:

- 60 million Americans say that the Internet helped them make big decisions or negotiate their way through major episodes in their lives.

- More than half (55 percent) of all online American youths ages 12–17 use online social networking sites.

- Fully 87 percent of online users have at one time used the Internet to carry out research on a scientific topic or concept.

In 2006, the MacArthur Foundation launched a five-year, $50 million digital media and learning initiative to determine how digital technology is changing the way younger generations are learning, playing, socializing, and participating in civic life. The foundation is engaging in this substantial endeavor because it wants to inform social institutions, such as libraries, how we need to respond to the changing needs of our communities. One noteworthy paper it commissioned is *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century*, which discusses cultural competencies and social skills as new media literacies that are developed through collaboration and networking in online community. Its author claims that a "participation gap" is occurring because some students don't have access to the new communities that are developing online. This results in not just a lack of technology for low-income children, but also a lack of opportunities for them to participate in society. "The new media literacies should be seen as social skills, as ways of interacting within a larger community, and not simply an individualized skill to be used for personal expression."[4]

The report states that "librarians … are reconceptualizing their role less as curators of bounded collection and more as information

facilitators who can help users find what they need, online or off, and can cultivate good strategies for searching material." While some libraries strive to reach this goal, others don't even acknowledge this work as a library service priority. The report calls on after-school programs to be sites "of experimentation and innovation, a place where educators catch up with the changing culture and teach new subjects that expand children's understanding of the world. Museums, public libraries, churches, and social organizations can play important roles, each drawing on its core strengths to expand beyond what can be done during the official school day."

American Library Association (ALA) President Leslie Burger formed a task force in 2006 to create a National Library Agenda; the draft version was released in January 2007 (wikis.ala.org/national libraryagenda/images/f/f4/Discussion_Draft_MW_2007_final_ 1-11-07.pdf). The goal was to create a clear, compelling, and positive public message for all libraries, and to provide a focus for library activities. Library technology training addresses many of the six major theme areas in this agenda:

1. Libraries Preserve the Past and Provide a Bridge to the Future

2. Libraries Build and Strengthen Communities

3. Libraries Support Lifelong Learning

4. Libraries Create Information and Technology Literate Communities

5. Libraries Encourage Economic Development

6. Libraries Support Democracy

Library technology training, for both patrons and staff, plays a role in supporting all six areas. "Libraries Create Information and Technology Literate Communities," for instance, contains the

following description: "Technology offers unprecedented opportunities for critical thinking, information sharing, information access and social networks. Great libraries offer opportunities for all people to use new technologies and participate in the information society. Libraries in our communities, school and universities should be a trusted destination for cutting edge technology that provides for innovation, creation and connection."

And, in "Libraries Encourage Economic Development," we find: "Our information-based economy requires a highly trained and competitive workforce. Many people are unable to go back to school to obtain the skills needed to participate in a 21st-century workforce relying instead on libraries to supply the resources needed to obtain new skills and work. At the same time the increase in small businesses, home-based businesses and entrepreneurship finds many who relied on workplace libraries seeking the assistance of local libraries when it comes to securing competitive intelligence, information about business start-ups, and business planning."

Libraries can help provide the skills and experiences needed to become full participants in the social, cultural, economic, and political future of our information-based society. Many groups use online technologies to stay connected locally. People are connecting online in communities around reading, books, and information sharing. Much government information and commerce is now only available online. Entrepreneurship through home-based business, which tends to rely heavily on technology, is becoming one of the most prevalent and permanent forms of employment.

By offering the vital service of technology training to our communities, we can help create more satisfied customers, which, in turn, are voters who are more supportive of libraries and their services.

Survey Question: Why Should Libraries Provide Technology Training?

Meredith Farkas, Distance Learning Librarian, Norwich University, Northfield (VT) – "Libraries should provide technology training because it's a natural extension of what we already do. We already train patrons in how to use library resources, so teaching them how to effectively use other technologies makes perfect sense. In most public libraries, patrons are already coming to librarians for help with setting up e-mail, searching the Internet, and using other technologies. Offering training is just doing what we're already doing for individual patrons, but doing it for an entire group in an environment more conducive for learning. Training other librarians is crucial for providing good services to our patrons. If librarians are often looked to for help with technology, they need to be comfortable using these technologies. So often, public service librarians don't know how to fix printers, use scanners, and operate other basic equipment in the library. When called upon to deal with problems with these technologies, they are unable to help. In addition, librarians need to keep up with what technologies their patrons are using in order to see how these technologies might be applied in the library. Training can address both the basic library technology competencies that all public service librarians should have as well as teaching them about technologies that could be applied in libraries."

Michael Stephens, Instructor, Graduate School of Library & Information Science at Dominican University, River Forest (IL) – "One of the foremost roles of the library in the 21st century will be to guide users through the torrents of information

available and teach them how to make sense of it. This role will also include instruction in how the systems work, or guided exploration. We're moving away from the step-by-step method of instruction. I would rather a trainer help users understand what resources are there, how to play with interfaces, and how to select the most appropriate information. We could say BI (Bibliographic Instruction) is dead, and librarian as information guide will be the wave of the future."

Sarah Houghton-Jan, Information and Web Services Manager, San Mateo County Library, San Mateo (CA) – "Libraries should provide as much technology training as possible to staff, and I mean staff at all levels, so that they can best serve our users—who at this point, let's be honest, know more about technology than the average librarian. Much of today's technology is focused on information retrieval and organization. To have library staff that are not proficient with those technologies is inexcusable. Look to Helene Blowers's well-known Learning 2.0 Program as an example of full staff integration into a tech training program. Libraries should provide increasing amounts of, and diverse types of, technology training to users because it's what they need to function in today's information economy. We have always served the information poor more than anyone else in our community, and today, that means serving the technology poor too."

Max Anderson, Educational Services Librarian, SOLINET, Atlanta (GA) – "I think the most important reason for why libraries should provide technology training is that patrons expect and want it. It not only empowers patrons in their

abilities with technology for the future, it also allows the
library staff to keep up-to-date on technology and practice
their training skills. It's a win-win situation."

What Types of Technology Training
Do Libraries Usually Offer?

I've conducted technology training workshops in rural and
urban areas across the U. S. and am always amazed that the same
basic training skills are still needed, especially in rural libraries.
(The answers to the online survey reflect this need as well.)
Chapter 10 includes many innovative ways that libraries are doing
technology training beyond these basics, such as training on
emerging technologies. The most common workshops, however,
are offered on:

- Internet (introductory and intermediate)
- Computer basics, such as using the mouse and
  organizing files
- Microsoft Applications such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint,
  and Publisher
- E-mail and e-mail culture
- Web design
- Database and catalog searching

Is Technology Training Different Than
Other Kinds of Training?

Training on technology topics definitely evokes different issues
than training on soft skills. First, you do have to have some technical

Survey Question: What Types of Technology Workshops Are Offered by Your Library?

Helene Blowers, Technology Director, Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County, Charlotte (NC) – "For staff, we offer training in four areas: technology, electronic resources, library skills (such as reader's advisory and the reference interview), and management and supervisory skills. For patrons, our technology workshops cover the spectrum, from basic mouse skills to exploring new and emerging technologies such as Web 2.0 tools (Flickr, Picasa, MySpace for Parents, etc.)."

Anonymous – "Each branch library offers a variety of basic programs: basic Internet classes, how-to-use e-mail, Web browsing, digital photography. We haven't delved into advanced topics yet. Currently, the most basic classes (basic Internet and e-mail) are still the most popular classes that our libraries offer."

Bernadette Rivard, Supervisor of Technical Services, Milford Town Library, Milford (MA) – There are five classes in the Information Literacy Series: Using the Online Catalog; Finding and Evaluating Information on the Internet & in the Library Databases; Researching Medical Conditions & Prescription Drugs; Researching Jobs, Careers & Companies; and Researching Purchasing a Consumer Product. There are also five classes in the Microsoft Office Series: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, and Access."

Scott Hines, Reference Librarian, Pacific Graduate School of Psychology, Palo Alto (CA) – "We offer technology

workshops in EndNote bibliographic instruction software and also on how to use Adobe Acrobat Professional, and informal training on MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, but in my previous job, I did formal classes on Windows, Word, Access, Excel, ColdFusion, PHP, XML, using the network, Web design, open source software, using e-mail, using and administering Blackboard and WebCT, and working with experts on technology projects."

expertise. And we all know that using technology can cause certain problems in and of itself, such as unreliability. You can't do technology training just anywhere, you do need to have some kind of equipment—preferably a hands-on environment like a computer lab. Then, you also have to maintain and update that equipment.

But are the skills needed to do technology training different than those we use to train on other topics? Learning is about change. It doesn't really matter if training is about soft skills or technological topics; the fundamental principles are the same. In their book *Telling Ain't Training*, authors Stolovitch and Keeps assert: "To summarize hundreds of studies, the effectiveness of messages aimed at learning is not bound up in the delivery vehicle but rather in how the message itself is designed … Self-paced print or sophisticated, electronically delivered instruction is only as effective as the instruction design principles that are applied."[5]

Chapter 2 examines some universal training principles, the most important of which is to have the participants actively involved in the learning process.

Endnotes

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2. Otto Friedrich, "The Computer Moves In," *Time Magazine*, Jan. 3, 1983. Accessed March 29, 2007 (www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816, 953632,00.html).
3. Lev Grossman, "Time's Person of the Year: You," *Time Magazine*, Dec. 13, 2006. Accessed March 29, 2007 (www.time.com/time/magazine/ article/0,9171,1569514,00.html).
4. Henry Jenkins, "Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century," The MacArthur Foundation. Accessed March 29, 2007 (www.digitallearning.macfound.org/site/c.en JLKQNlFiG/b.2029291/k.97E5/Occasional_Papers.htm).
5. Harold Stolovitch and Erica Keeps, *Telling Ain't Training*, Alexandria, VA: ASTD, 2002: 14–15.