GUIDELINES ON INFORMATION LITERACY FOR LIFELONG LEARNING*

Final draft

By

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Abstract

The International Guidelines on Information Literacy have been compiled by the Information Literacy Section (InfoLit) of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) with the aim of providing a pragmatic framework for those professionals who need or are interested in starting an information literacy program. The guidelines will aid information professionals engaged in educational programs, i.e., basic and higher education, in their efforts to meet their current information needs. However, most of the concepts, principles and procedures can be applied with minimal adaptation to any library setting. Information professionals working in all types of libraries should have as one of their main institutional goals the facilitation of users' efforts to acquire information competencies. Information skills are vital to the success of lifelong learning, employment, and daily interpersonal communication of any citizen, such as when a person needs information about health services for someone in his/her care, or a student requires specific information to complete an assessment.

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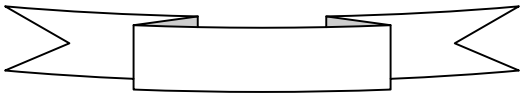

Chapter 2

Information Literacy and Lifelong Learning

With contributions by
Forest Woody Horton, Jr.

Information literacy and lifelong learning have a strategic, mutually reinforcing relationship with each other that is critical to the success of every individual, organization, institution, and nation-state in the global information society. These two modern paradigms should ideally be harnessed to work symbiotically and synergistically with one another if people and institutions are to successfully survive and compete in the 21st century and beyond.

Inter-relations of the two concepts. Both of these concepts:

- Are largely self-motivated and self-directed. They do not require the mediation of an outside individual, an organization, or a system beyond the individual himself or herself, although advice and assistance from a respected friend such as a mentor or coach can be helpful.
- Are self-empowering. They are aimed at helping individuals of all age groups to help themselves, regardless of their social or economic status, role or place in society, gender, race, religion or ethnic background.
- Are self-actuating. The more information literate an individual becomes, and the longer the individual sustains good information literacy learning and practices those habits, the greater the self-enlightenment that will occur, especially if practiced over an entire lifetime.

Theoretically one could pursue the goal of becoming more information literate but not continuously over one's lifetime. Conversely, one could pursue the goal of lifelong learning but without having first become information literate. Taken alone, neither path maximizes the potential of the individual to "learn to learn."

Information literacy and lifelong learning. Harnessed together, information literacy and lifelong learning substantially improve the:

- Set of personal choices and options opened up for, and offered to, an individual in the context of personal, family and societal matters.
- Quality and utility of education and training in both formal school settings preceding entry into the workforce, and later in informal vocational or on-the-job training settings.
- Prospects of finding and keeping a satisfying job and moving up the career ladder rapidly and with appropriate rewards, and making cost-effective and wise economic and business decisions.