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*The 6th World Conference on Continuing Professional Development
and Workplace Learning for the Library and Information Professions*

*CPD – Preparing For New Roles In Libraries:
A Voyage Of Discovery*

Developing Models of Professional Competence

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Developing Models of Professional Competence to Enhance Employability

Presentation outline

- Introduction – key drivers of change
- Developing roles – convergence + divergence
- Expanding skills – specialists + generalists
- Reframing competence – statements + models
- Conclusion – areas for further research

Making sense of our position in the network world

Key Drivers of Change in the Networked World



- Rapid advances in computing and networking
 - from automated operations to transformed content
- Convergence of interests around e-delivery
 - blurring of functional and disciplinary boundaries
- Emergence of multi-services and new specialties
 - challenges for initial professional education and CPD

The Net as technological base, organisational form
and professional mode for the information age

New and Evolving Roles

Messages from the Literature



- Supporting evidence-based policy and practice
 - demonstrating the value of the ‘expert searcher’
- Expanding teaching and assessment activities
 - working with learning (content) management systems
- Assuming responsibility for organisational assets
 - managing intranets / repositories and advising on IPR

Information intensity and the end-user revolution
driving the need for context-specific added value

New and Evolving Roles

Evidence from Recruitment



- Jobs with ‘electronic’ or ‘digital’ in their titles
 - operational, developmental and strategic positions
- Posts with an IT-related or educational focus
 - both add-ons to traditional titles and new specialisms
- Roles with explicit responsibility for knowledge
 - especially common in the UK (eg health sector)

Current recruitment marketplace characterised by diversity of titles and differences in interpretation

Evolving Roles Trend Analysis

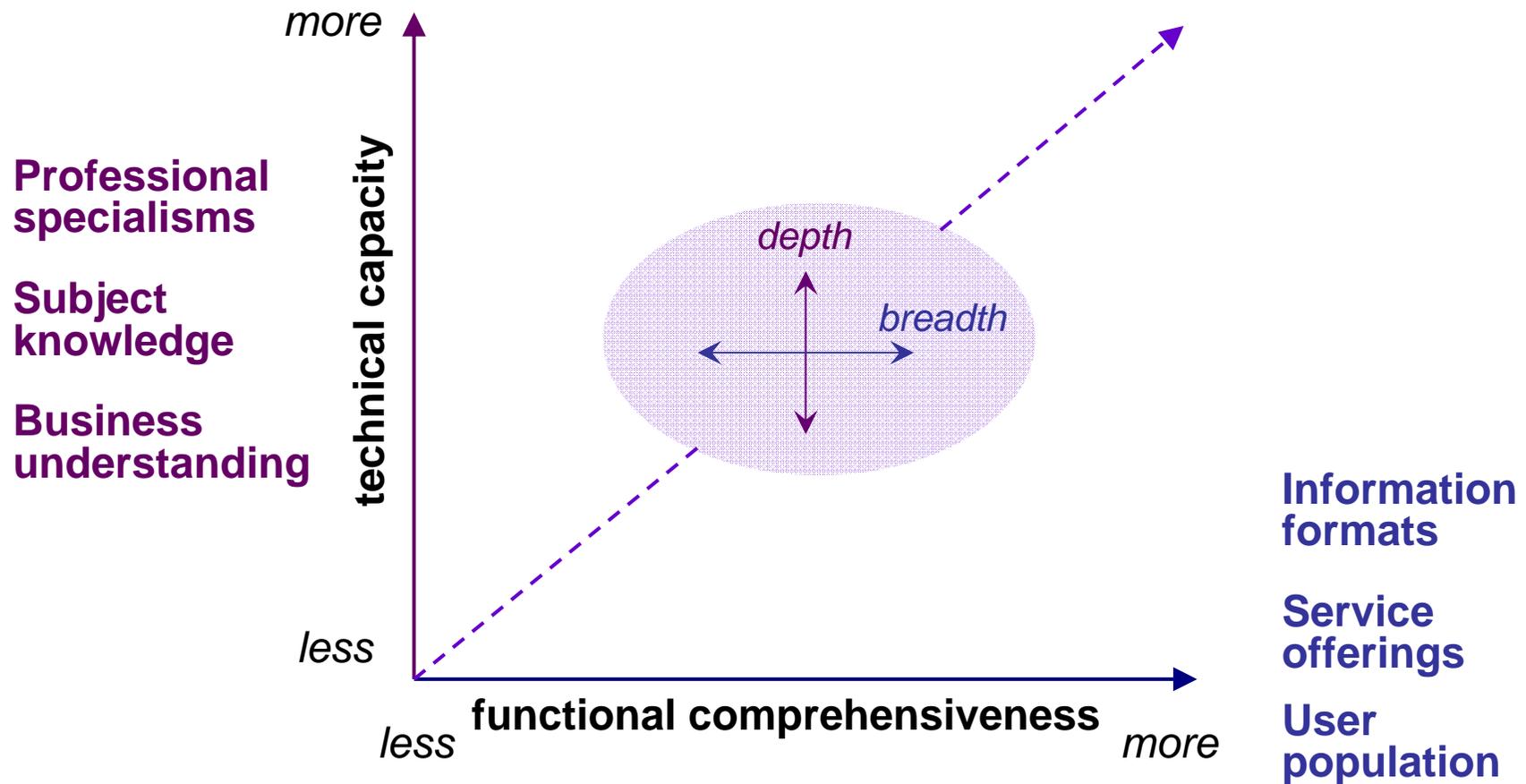


- Broadening in coverage and scope of LIS work
 - print / digital, published / in-house, data / know-how
 - information literacy + IT, study and research skills
- Deepening in level of specialist knowledge
 - metadata schema, software plug-ins, web authoring
 - fuller understanding of business and user contexts

Convergence with other related professions,
divergence of career paths within our own field?

Broadening and Deepening Professional Capability

More functionality at higher capacity?



After NSF (2003) *Revolutionizing Science and Engineering through Cyberinfrastructure*

Divergence of Career Paths

A Possible Scenario



- Technical ‘infostructure’ specialists
 - designing, developing, managing and supporting the organisation’s information infrastructure
- Functional ‘biz-focus’ specialists
 - aligning information to business and personal needs, applying information solutions to client problems

Similar pattern identified for information systems professionals in US studies (Lee et al., 1995)

LIS Sector Skills Needs Findings from UK Studies



- Research highlights breadth of skillset required
 - managerial / personal competencies biggest concern
- Studies prioritise leadership and IT capability
 - organisational (contextual) understanding also vital
- Reports suggest change in mindset needed
 - from support function / service to strategic partner

Business focus and personal attributes determine
value added to organisations by LIS expertise

Librarians as Technologists

What Kind of Skills?



- Frontline staff need skills for basic support
 - library systems, Internet services, office tools, etc
- Liaison roles need client-related understanding
 - how different professional groups use IT resources
- Digital librarians need specialist techie skills
 - imaging technologies, mark-up, programming, etc

Skills needs depend on role and context, including knowledge of system capacities and user needs

LIS Competency Statements Applications Identified



- Professional education – design, benchmarking, assessment and accreditation of programmes
- Personal development planning – helping people to identify and analyse their skills needs
- Human resource management – recruitment, appraisal, reward and development of staff
- Marketing the profession – promoting our unique set of competencies to clients and employers

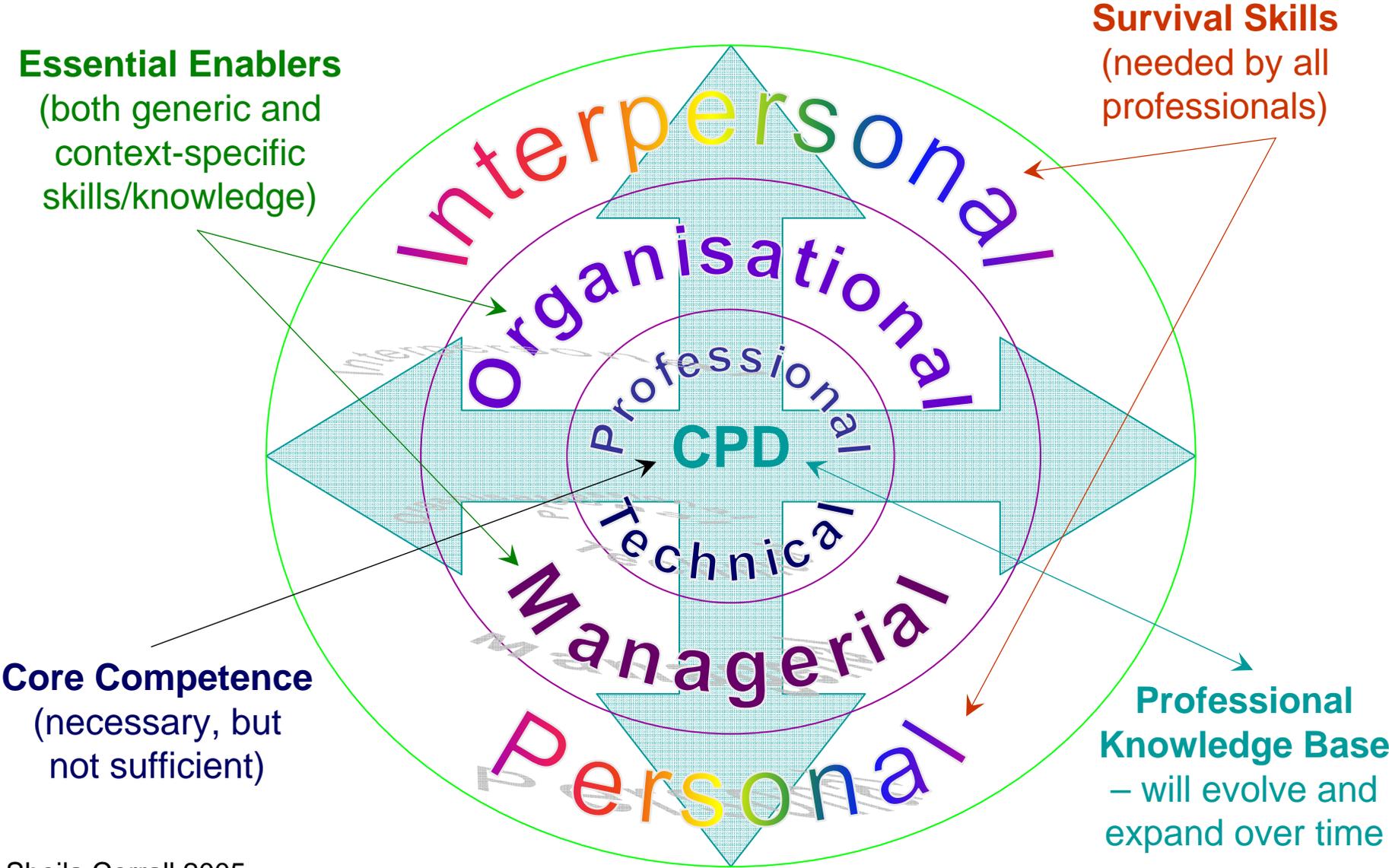
LIS Competency Statements Weaknesses Identified



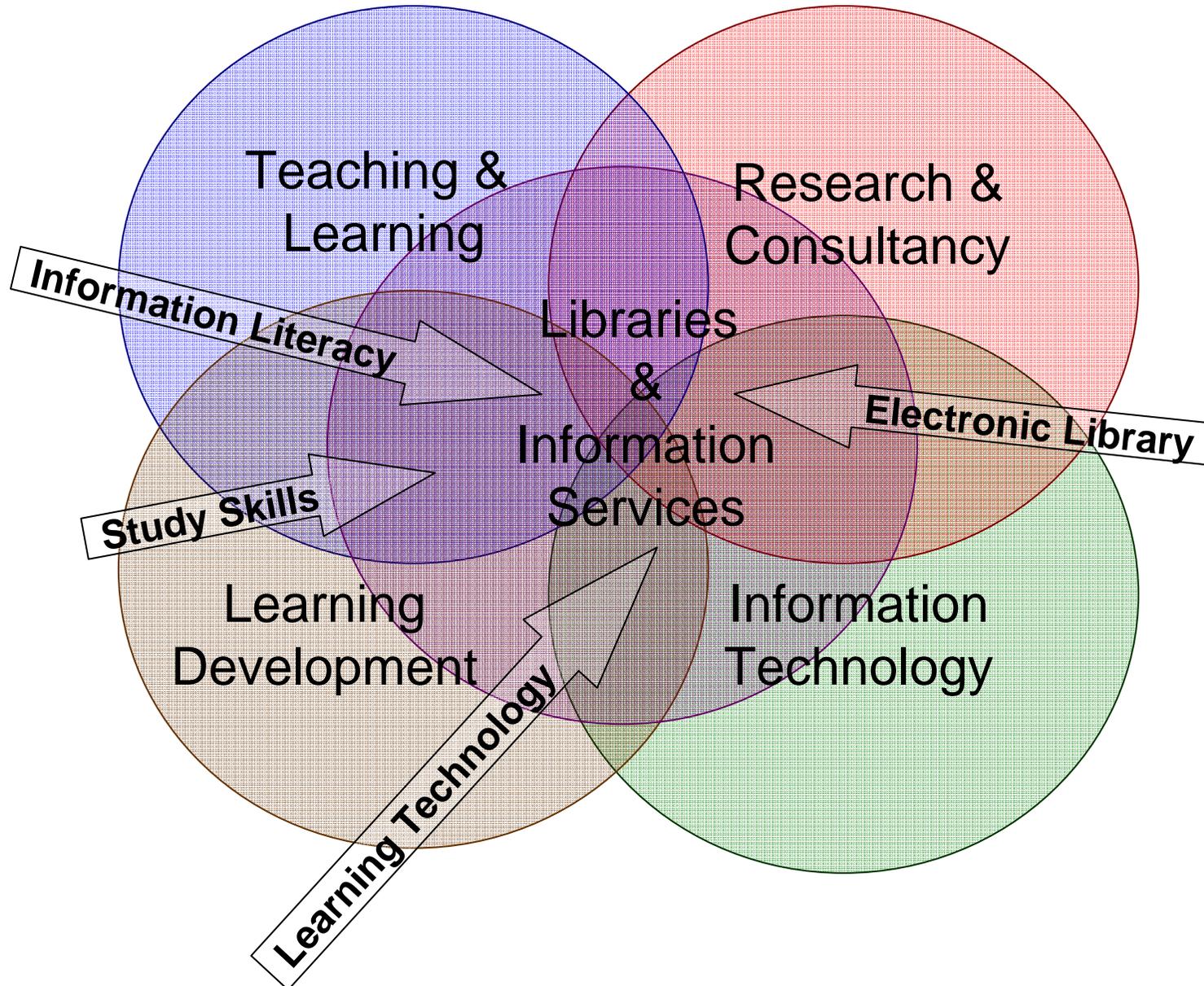
- Confused picture of different skillset categories
 - poor differentiation of specialist (information-related) skills from generic ones shared with other professions
 - weak articulation of overlapping (boundary-spanning) skills now essential to many information professionals
- Narrative style makes them hard / slow to digest
 - length of statements reduces usefulness in practice

Need models to capture the complexity, simplify the situation and provide a coherent framework

Differentiating and Contextualising Professional Competence



Evolving and Overlapping Professional Specialisms



Roles, Skills and Competencies

Questions for Investigation



- Will we see more explicit technical specialisation emerging within LIS practice and education?
- How will future information management roles be divided between info pros, IS / IT pros and others with info-oriented backgrounds?
- Can we identify and define different levels of information-related competencies for 'specialist', 'intensive' and other types of information users?

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