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“Self-Assessment: Your Ideal Role as an Information Worker” By Robin Neidorf

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By Robin Neidorf

About the Author

Robin Neidorf is the General Manager of Free Pint Limited and has been working on the FUMSI concept for two years. FUMSI is a trademark of Free Pint Limited. Register to receive updates on FUMSI reports and offerings: <http://www.freepint.com/fumsiform.htm>. She welcomes your feedback while we further develop FUMSI offerings and publish FUMSI reports <http://web.freepint.com/go/shop/report/>. To learn more about FUMSI, visit <http://www.freepint.com/fumsi/>.

Think about the tasks in front of you at work every day. How many of them represent the kind of work you thought you'd be engaged in when you earned your information credentials?

Or maybe you came into information work along a different career path. You never thought of yourself as an 'information professional', and yet you're constantly interacting with information – finding it, interpreting it, organising it or presenting it.

Regardless of how you came to be doing what you are doing today (and does it bear any resemblance to your job description, anyway?), you probably find yourself carrying out a whole range of projects that weren't covered in your university classes. Managing content for an intranet ... discovering hidden Web resources and mining them for high-value information ... evaluating federated search products ... coaching internal stakeholders on the ROI of premium content services in the face of cost-cutting requirements, alongside freebies they're in the habit of using ... not to mention keeping on top of incoming e-mails and voice mails and catching a bit of YouTube in the off-hours.

Present to future

It's hard to ignore a growing number of e-mails in your inbox and stack of papers on your desktop, but it can be a challenge to identify patterns in the chaos. You can't expect to develop your career in the future unless you understand what you're doing now.

In an ideal world, you could take an easy online quiz that told you to input your work duties, and it would output your ideal job. Everyone knows that finding a dream job isn't as simple as that, but you can start to plan your future by knowing what it is you're doing today with Jinfo's self-assessment test.

It starts by narrowing down the categories of information work into FUMSI. FUMSI is an acronym for Find, Use, Manage and Share Information. And in today's business world, almost everybody has a way to FUMSI. Information is no longer a specialisation but is an essential component of 'everybody's' job. By emphasising the value of FUMSI to helping businesses reach their goals, both traditional and non-traditional information professionals are strategically positioned to be not just useful but utterly essential to their organisations.

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FUMSI

The FUMSI concept recognises that the role of information in business reaches far beyond the corporate library or resource centre. It puts information professionals where the action is: at the strategic decision-making level, as well as on the desktop of every employee. FUMSI roles include:

- **Finding Information:** Search and research
- **Using Information:** Analysis and advice
- **Managing Information:** Storage, organisation and retrieval
- **Sharing Information:** Communication and education

The purpose for this kind of self-assessment is to conduct a kind of personal inventory of skills and interests. With that kind of self-knowledge, a professional can make informed decisions about how to put together an effective collaborative team. If you're a Finder and Sharer, then you need to work with professionals who bring the Using and Managing skills to the table. Similarly, if your highest interest score is for Using Information, but your current job rarely relies on those skills, you're able to make better decisions about what's next in your career.

Find out how you rank by taking this self-assessment survey on FUMSI practice and interests:

<http://digbig.com/4trmk>

Provide an email address on the final page to receive a personalised report showing your responses against the aggregated averages.

Rankings and results

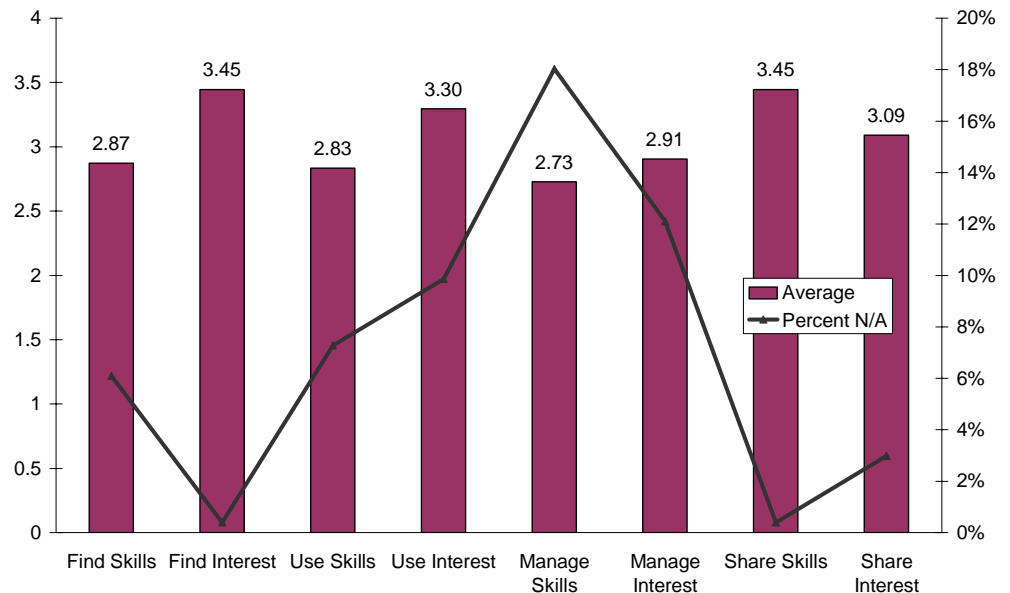
Results so far paint an interesting picture of what information practitioners are doing at work, as well as what their interests are.

Figure 1 shows aggregated responses to the core questions on the survey, which ask participants to rate a series of activities on a scale of 1 – 4 according to how often they perform them at work as well as how much they enjoy using particular skills. Each series of activities and skills relates to one of the four practice areas. Participants are also able to select a 'not applicable' option.

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Some interesting observations emerge from looking at even this single graph. The bars show aggregated averages for each of the FUMSI practice areas. For example, the first two bars show aggregated averages for how much respondents rely on 'Find' skills at work (eg, using general or specialist databases, searching the web, conducting interviews or focus groups, etc) and how much respondents enjoy using a 'Find' orientation at work. Of the four practice areas, our respondents most often use 'Share' skills (such as writing, presenting, publishing or teaching) and most enjoy applying their 'Find' interests; both scored an average of 3.45 on the 4-point scale.

Equally interesting is that those were the two areas with the fewest N/A responses, represented by the black bar on the graph. Meanwhile, 'Manage' skills (eg, records management, database design, archive policy and management, etc.) received the lowest average score (2.73) as well as the highest percentage of N/A responses.

Bottom line

No single survey can tell you what you should be doing for a living. But starting with a simple self-assessment survey can help you begin on a route of employment self-discovery. Aggregated results can also give you an indication of what your co-workers are doing and where the industry is headed.

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FreePint FUMSI Report -- European Research Resources



European Research Resources

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"This report aims to sketch some of the background to the EU's development, point out the functions of some of the key institutions, and above all indicate useful sources of information, both on the EU and on Europe considered more broadly. These will include general gateways as well as sites for more specific subjects such as Law or Business. Official and non-official sources will be noted, including some which go beyond the boundaries of the present EU."

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