

Information Professionals' Career Confidential: Straight Talk and Savvy Tips

Ulla de Stricker

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Ulla de Stricker



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Ulla de Stricker : Information Professionals' Career Confidential: Straight Talk and Savvy Tips before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Information Professionals' Career Confidential: Straight Talk and Savvy Tips:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great book for getting to where you want to go within LISBy CustomerBuilding a career takes time. It involves pursuing opportunities, embracing challenges and growing expertly. That is what Ulla de Strickerrrsquo;s new book Information Professionalsrsquo; Career Confidential: Straight Talk and

Savvy Tips is about. It is a motivating resource for new information professionals, or those interested in the profession, especially individuals open to alternative career options. The book covers a very wide variety of topics and practical skills, but moreover provides inspiration for what you can do to lead up to your dream career. Over the course of her career Ulla has risen to the occasion, shifting the focus of her expertise to provide what the information profession needs. This publication is no exception. Among new professionals and LIS students there is anxiety, tension, and apprehension when considering their career options. This book helps ease the worry and gives practical suggestions on how to achieve your career goals. Ulla genuinely wants to help people succeed, pursue, and keep developing their careers. Divided into two parts, forging and finding an information career, this book is a nice length with no wasted space intended for people newly interested, studying, or entering the LIS field. It is a quick read that will open your mind to possibilities you had not considered before about the fast, evolving LIS world. As Ulla says, "my comments in this book are intended to inspire you to find your perfect professional path." The book makes suggestions for alternative jobs that can set you on the path of accomplishing your career goals. The publication is presented in a variety of formats, kind of like a textbook. There are interviews, pop-out sections, and essential recommendations. The tone is positive and the outlook optimistic. Ulla's voice shines through, as the book is written like a conversation between a mentor and mentee. It includes interviews with a variety of professionals and students. This style may not be for everyone, but after reading tweets, posts and blogs about the new LIS professional struggle, it is nice to read about other options. Ulla calls this book a "sampling of considerations" and tells you what the challenges are without dwelling on them. Instead, Ulla's book offers alternative opportunities and ways of succeeding. Conversing or encouraging new LIS professionals to follow the path less taken can be tricky, as many wish to follow what Ulla calls the "pure path of librarianship." Some individuals might take it as a threat of failure or a discouragement to follow your dreams. This book encourages the "alternativerdquo;" and may not be for everyone. I myself have benefitted from keeping an open mind. Ulla suggests that taking an opportunity that is right for the moment can greatly help you on your path to your ultimate career. You might even come across opportunities you didn't know about and completely fulfill you. Ulla really makes you reflect on the big picture. What you do today, even if it isn't the perfect, can lead to the big things you are after. There were many surprise moments in the book that made me reflect on what makes me unique and how to contribute that to the workforce. I appreciate that a small amount of the content is on the current issues, and most put on solutions. Some of the examples or suggestion might have benefit from statistical information to back up them up. That being said, there were many topics that provide interesting insight not covered in LIS studies or workplace orientation. I particularly liked discussion on branding oneself. It would have been helpful if a few of the sections had been fleshed out, but that would compromise the easy read. In all, this book resonated with me. I found myself agreeing with many points, for example about volunteering time to make connections. At the same time I imagined colleagues who would probably disagree, arguing that free work devalues the profession. The field is not perfect. There are so many factors at play. However, that is also what makes it exciting and versatile. The book's emphasis on connections and networking and participation are what stand out as advice all information professionals should head. This book gives examples on how you can make those connections, posing important questions that in our busy lives we might be neglecting to ask. More than anything, this book will inspire. It will give you ideas and motivate you. It will encourage you to become an active player in paving your career path.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I've always loved her writing style
By Deborah Keller
Again, Ulla de Stricker has produced a piece that I believe will appeal to a wide audience. I've always loved her writing style. It is simple and clear, yet her messages are well developed and she writes with the authority that comes with experience. I find this piece particularly engaging, as it addresses such a wide range of questions that are being bantered about in the library and information professions right now. What I liked best about this book is the way that de Stricker seamlessly blends together the traditional library profession with the more modern knowledge management field. She doesn't indicate to the reader that the information professional whose work is the focus has changed when that focus shifts. This sends the message that the traditional librarian can, and perhaps should take on the role of knowledge manager within their organization. This new role may be as simple as having the individual change the way they describe their own capabilities and giving themselves a new job description. This may also be an example of a career transition, or simply a way to change the perception that the organization has about the role and capabilities of the information professional, also issues that de Stricker addressed. De Stricker made two assertions that jumped out at me. First, she contends that librarians are part of a creative profession. I had never thought about our work that way. I had always considered us more analytical, perhaps loosely scientific, following well-established research methods, search patterns, and proven systems for finding information. However, de Stricker persuasively points out how flexible these methods can be, how readily librarians adopt new sources and even new technologies, and how our task may be seen broadly as making order out of chaos. Second, she maintains that librarians are all in the sales business. Savvy librarians already realize that they must market

their libraries' services in order to keep the libraries from being closed. However, de Stricker takes this several steps further, asserting that all information professionals need to advertise their skills or capabilities that can benefit their customers or their organizations. They need to be more assertive and explain how they can contribute to business teams, project background research, succession planning, and other organizational tasks since managers may not understand on their own how information professionals can contribute to traditional business activities. There are many valuable nuggets to take away from this book. Among the most valuable messages that de Stricker wants the reader to get is that the information professional needs to learn to speak the language of the businesses in which they work. Whether becoming a valued partner on a business team or a subject matter expert in the area of information and knowledge management, knowing how to explain what they can contribute to the organization is essential. Another message that de Stricker wants readers to walk away with is that librarians must be expert communicators. While they may have developed good listening and questioning skills in traditional roles, they must also maintain high standards in their speaking and writing, even when society around them seems more relaxed about using proper grammar. She provides numerous examples of non-traditional roles for information professionals, making a Masters of Information Science degree sound appealing to a wide range of professionals already working in the knowledge industry as well as to students with interests in information-related fields that today's technology has made more accessible. This book serves as a great manual for the next generation of information professionals.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Valued Skills can always find opportunities...By /basNo one warned you about the challenge of searching for work when they were signing you up for your degree, right?Ulla de Stricker, in her new book, Information Professionals' Career Confidential: Straight Talk and Savvy Tips, is about to be your new best friend.Two out of three students entering the Master of Information degree at the University of Toronto, for instance, have aspirations to be a librarian. Yet there just aren't that many librarian jobs available out there. What there are, on the other hand, are more than enough other jobs, not labelled specifically as requiring an information specialist, but ideally filled by them.Writing with a quick, coherent style, and punctuating her advice to job seekers in the information industries with vignettes of real people facing the same situations the job seeker is, Ulla walks information professionals — newly graduated or newly laid off — through the process of finding work in today's economy. She teaches how to really read job specifications carefully; how to think about, and position, your skills as someone who can "do that"; and how to portray yourself not as a job, but as a problem solver.From her position as an internationally-recognized information consultant, Ulla steps candidates through the whole process of getting and staying employed. She points out how important taking part in conferences and industry organisations is to being in the loop. This is advice she has practiced in her distinguished career: an MLS (Master of Library Science) who has never worked as a librarian, but has worked in the information sector and been an active participant in library organisations and conferences throughout. She talks at length about how we're all — job holder, job seeker, or self-employed specialist — in business, and therefore how important self-branding, elevator pitches, seeing beyond the box of just one position description is. Information specialists, says Ulla, are problem solvers, and what people want to hire more than anything else is the solution to a problem they currently have.In today's economy, where management philosopher Peter Drucker's prediction that we would all be knowledge workers is now a fact of life, few in the organisation have the skills to hone institutional memory, determine contextual information needs, or even — often — the skills to organise their own information base. All of these are skills information specialists are trained in, and form the basis for solving organisational problems. All that's necessary is to learn how to speak the language of the business to be a valued contributor.Careers have been built on far less — but Ulla is not yet done. She moves on to discuss knowledge and information culture, and how to assess your current employer's maturity with these. Solving these sorts of problems is how a career is advanced. In other words, it's not enough to land the job: Ulla takes you through growing it, and yourself, as the years advance.Ulla closes Information Professionals' Career Confidential with a much needed discussion of communication styles, essential for those seeking a life in business applying their information skills rather than being in one of few explicitly "information organisations" with a well-defined information speciality job. Both for those transitioning from student life to work life, and for those transitioning from an explicit information job to a business position, these "savvy tips" are the difference between being someone who does a good job and gets minimal acknowledgement of it, and being a person of influence within the organisation.For those thinking of going into consulting, the tips in the "Quality in Communications" chapter alone are worth the price of the book.Information Professionals' Career Confidential: Straight Talk and Savvy Tips is a book you can read in an hour or two, yet one which will over time acquire the signs of being repeatedly referenced, marked up, thumbed through and an essential career guide. The best compliment that can be paid to it, however, is that while reading it, several other specialisations in the business world for whom this book would be equally applicable came to mind. It is a mandatory part of the working library of anyone trying to survive and thrive in the work world of the twenty-first century.

Based in part on a selection of the author's past blog postings, *Information Professionals' Career Confidential* is a convenient, browsable, and illuminating pocket compendium of insights on topics relevant for information and knowledge professionals at any stage of their careers. This book collects comments on matters of interest to new and experienced information professionals alike in 1-2 minute "quick takes," inviting further thought. Topics range from the value of knowledge management and effective communication in organizations to assessing employers' perception of information professionals and how best to increase one's value through professional organizations and volunteering. This unique resource will be illuminating for anyone in library and information science, career development, or knowledge and information management. Raises questions in a lively and concise manner; relevant for information professionals. Offers readers the opportunity to read entries one at a time for reflection, or to read the entire book and then go back to certain entries to consolidate the meaning. Presents ideas and concepts from thoughtful perspectives in a style designed to make professionals and students reflect on their own careers.

"This book should be the preferred reading for anyone considering or entering a career as information professionals. I personally wish it had been available when I started my career..." --Multimedia Information and Technology
About the Author: A widely respected information professional working in the information industry since the late 1970s and as a knowledge management consultant since 1992, Ulla de Stricker is known for her pioneering activities, leadership, and support to colleagues through conference presentations, articles, books, and in the last several years through her Information and Knowledge Management Blog. Professionally, she assists clients in a wide range of strategic planning projects (see <http://www.destricker.com>).