Kirsten Thompson, BCS
Computing Consultant
Information Systems Technology
University of Waterloo

Background

Kirsten is a 44 year-old computing consultant working in Information Systems and Technology. She started working at the University immediately after graduation and has held various roles within the IST department. Kirsten’s main projects at work include integrating third-party out-of-the-box software systems with custom internal systems and processes, as well as the required client support. Over the past ten years, Kirsten has worked with and supported the same system.

The library may have a lot good information that could help me stay current in my job, but the tools and processes are complicated and it’s just too hard to figure out what I need and where to get it.”

Kirsten understands that she has access to library resources, but has limited/isolated library experience over the past ten years –accessing travel guides, magazines and other resources that she would share with her family as they planned their annual trips. A few times, Kirsten has borrowed specific resources that her son Alex needed for a school project with the assistance of a librarian. Kirsten doesn’t know a lot about the topic she would like to research and lacks the background knowledge to differentiate a good resource from a poor one.
Motivation

Recently, Kirsten’s manager appointed her to an internal user-interface design-working group. After the first meeting, Kirsten felt that her approach to projects and familiarity with trends in development were out-of-date. Though she usually uses the campus library for meeting space or to research her annual family travel plans, Kirsten has committed to self-directed professional development to help augment her contribution to the working group.

Frustrations

Kirsten would like to visit the library during her lunch hour and get started with some basic books on user interface design, but is unaware of the terminology and relevant dates of publication that she needs to get started. A quick Google search returned so many varying resources that Kirsten felt overwhelmed and unable to make an informed choice. In addition, she finds the library lingo and catalogue system too complicated and often becomes frustrated within the first few minutes of her efforts.

Ideal Experience

Ideally, Kirsten would be able to use the reference tools with competence and find enough background information to better inform her resource needs.

• A list of resources by job function/department (popular books, new publications, etc.)
• Tips on how to stay current with job-related resources
• Access to online help in narrowing her resource searches (Ask a librarian)
• Access to on-site help in locating the desired resources
• Uses library services to get desired material/information (Information services, TUG or ILL requests)

Fast Facts

• Moderately ambitious
• Looking for career advancement
• Task-oriented
• Likely to ask for assistance
• Service preference: in person
• Usually for assisting others
• Pressured by Clients
• Likely to access from desktop