



THINK LIKE A FREELANCER:

How to get the most out of short-term contracts

Fiona Inglis, Brian Rooney, Kira Vermond – OLA 2017



Overview

- The current employment situation
- The advantages of contract work
- Making the most of your time
- Surviving financially in a precarious world

Who is in the audience?

- Librarian
- Library Technician
- Student
- New grad (0-2 years)
- Early-career (2-7 years)
- Mid-career (7+ years)
- Contract
- Permanent

THE JOB MARKET

Are things as bad as we think?

Quiz

1. How many librarian or library technician jobs in Ontario were posted on the iSchool jobsite in 2016?
2. How many were full-time permanent positions?
3. How many of the jobs were for new grads?

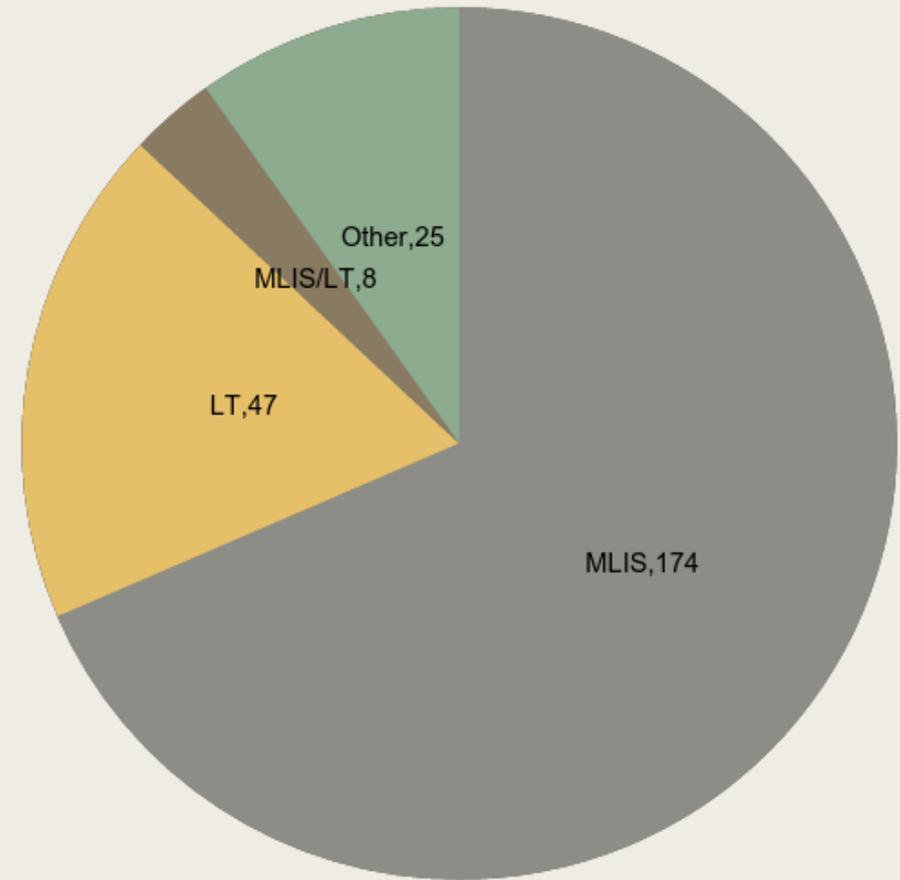
Question 1

- How many librarian or library technician jobs in Ontario were posted on the iSchool jobsite in 2016?

Question 1 - answer

Total number of jobs posted with closing
dates from Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2016

254



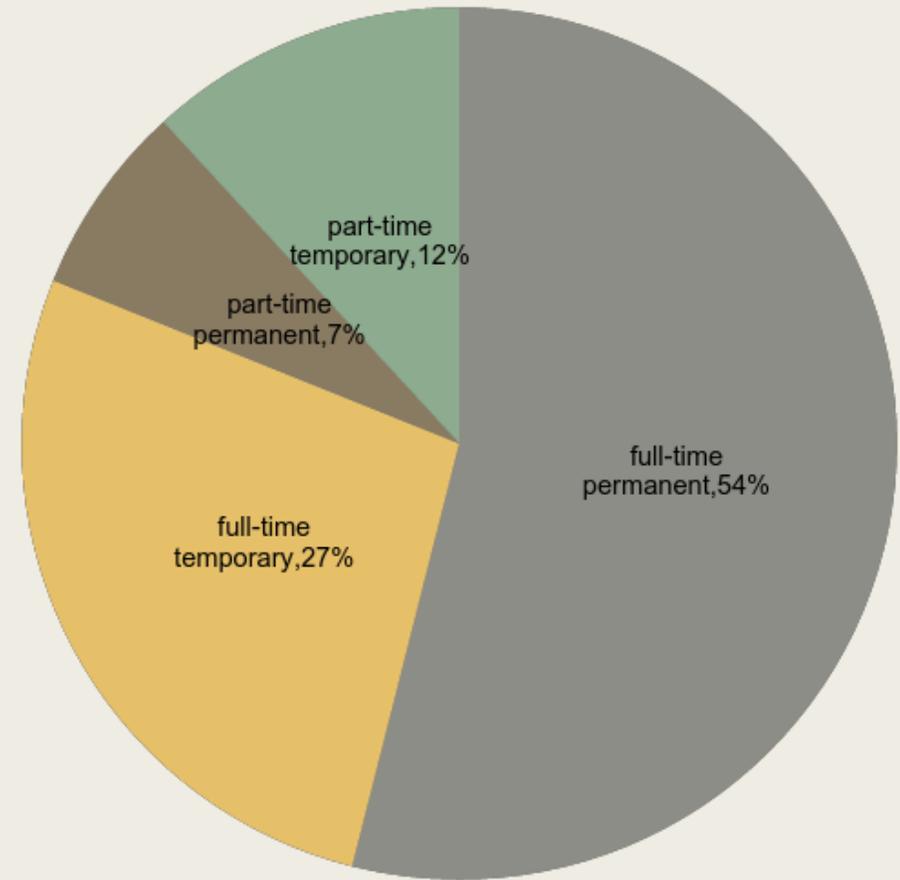
Question 2

- How many were full-time permanent positions?

Question 2 - answer

Number of full-time permanent
positions

137



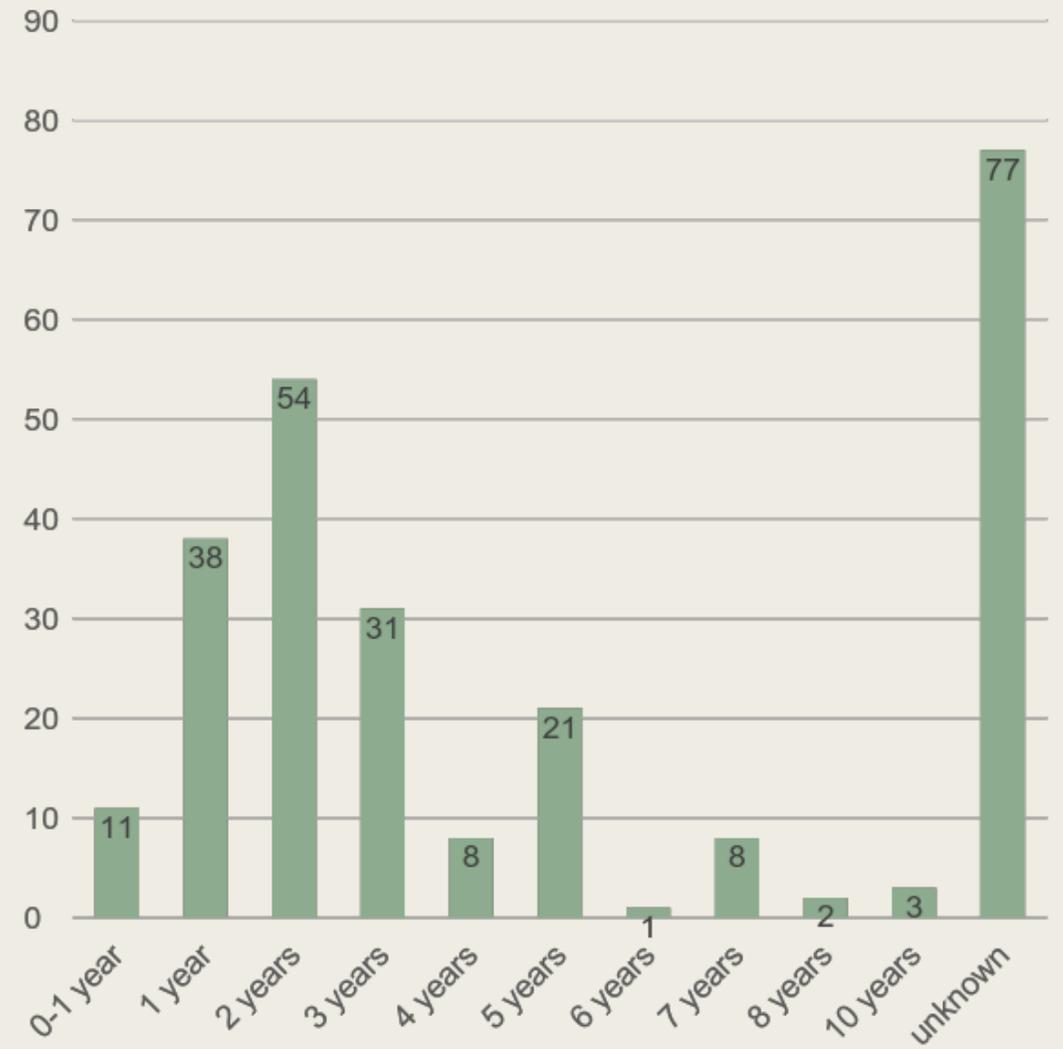
Question 3

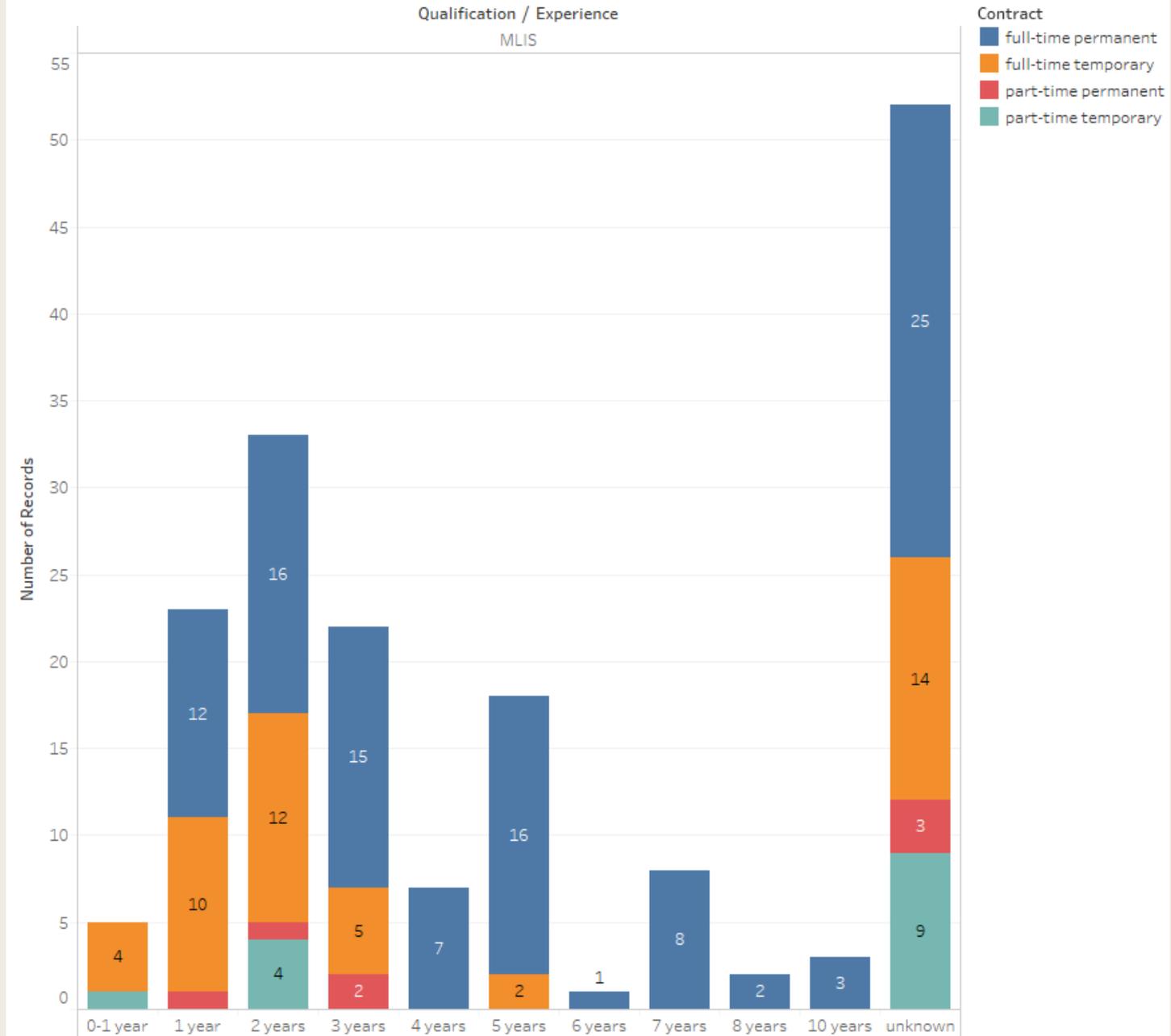
- How many of the jobs were for new grads?

Question 3 - answer

Positions requiring less than 1 year's
experience

11





Sum of Number of Records for each Experience broken down by Qualification. Color shows details about Contract. The marks are labeled by sum of Number of Records. The view is filtered on Qualification, which keeps MLIS.



IT'S NOT ALL BAD

The advantages of contract work

Life of a freelancer

“**Talent** will get you in the door, but **character** will keep you in the room.”

Career goals

“Do you enjoy what you do?
If not, just stop.
Don’t stay there and rot.”

Wham Rap! (Enjoy What You Do)
Lyrics by George Michael & Andrew Ridgeley (1982)



MAKE IT WORK

Tips from the trenches

Full time Career from Contract Work

- Still looking for a full time position?
- What can one do to attain a full time position through contract jobs?

Selecting a Contract Job with Your Future in Mind

- What skills do I have? What skills do I want?
- Compare and contrast your resume and contract job requirements
- Identify what you want and what you need

How to Look at it

- Contract job posting are checklists for your future development
- Look at what you have and what you need

Jane Smith
Address Line 1 Address Line 2, City, State Zip * (123) 456-1234 * jane.smith@gmail.com

CAREER OBJECTIVE
Administrative Assistant with 6+ years of experience working directly for the President of 3M Inc., a Fortune 500 company. Possesses impeccable written and verbal communication skills and excellent interpersonal skills.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Customer Service
- Cost Efficient
- Detailed and Organized
- Supplier Relationship

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

3M INC., New York, NY
Administrative Assistant, Apr 2006 – present

- Read and analyze incoming memos, submissions, and reports to determine their significance and plan their distribution.
- Conduct research, compile data, and prepare papers for consideration and presentation by executives, committees and boards of directors.
- Coordinate and direct office services, such as records, departmental finances, budget preparation, personnel issues, and housekeeping, to aid executives.
- Prepare invoices, reports, memos, letters, financial statements and other documents, using word processing, spreadsheet, database, or presentation software.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES, Orlando, FL
Rehabilitation Counselor, Aug 2004 – May 2005

- Confer with clients to discuss their options and goals so that rehabilitation programs and plans for accessing needed services can be developed.
- Prepare and maintain records and case files, including documentation such as clients' personal and eligibility information, services provided, narratives of client contacts, and relevant correspondence.
- Develop and maintain relationships with community referral sources, such as schools and community groups.
- Analyze information from interviews, educational and medical records, consultation with other professionals, and diagnostic evaluations to assess clients' abilities, needs, and eligibility for services.

EDUCATION

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY, Orlando, FL
Bachelor of Art in English, May 2004

- GPA: 3.5/4.0
- Published in school's newspaper editorial
- Summer Internship for the New York Times

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

- Proficient in Microsoft Office and Adobe Illustrator CS5
- Bilingual Spanish and English
- Certified CPR and First Aid

AWARDS AND HONORS

- Employee of the Month for 3 consecutive months in HRM
- Won the "Writer's Digest" 2002 Award
- Awarded an employee travel award due to "Performance Excellence" 2 years in a row through 3M Inc.

JOB OPPORTUNITY

A leading Power Utility Company is looking for a SAP CRM Functional Consultant.

Job Specification:
The candidate must have at least Bachelors degree, however, Masters degree would be preferred with SAP CRM certification with relevant experience. Preference will be given to candidates with SAP ISU/CRM environment understanding, having completed at least one full life cycle.

Skills Required:

- Strong decision making and leadership skills
- Strong analytical skills
- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to work under pressure and meet tight deadlines
- Able to work independently
- Able to plan and prioritize

The job offers competitive salary, excellent working environment and ample growth opportunities. Interested individuals fulfilling the above criteria should send their updated resumes to _____@yahoo.com by **02nd November, 2012.**

Sample Posting Analysis

- § Establish, maintain, support and enforce records and information management standards and monitor for conformance on all strategic projects for Corporate Legal
- § Reconcile and maintain business records in accordance to policies and procedures
- § **Participate and contribute to the automation component of Records Management for electronic records**
- § Receive, analyze, verify, and process active files within the Information Records Centers and process inactive record transfers
- § Administer storage procedures and disposition reports for inactive records
- § **Enforce a Record Classification and Retention System / Program** that will meet the business unit's business, legal, audit and regulatory requirements and fulfills privacy legislation requirements
- § **Enforce standard electronic file name conventions**

Highlighted text = Skills/Experience you possess

Bold Text = Skills you wish to learn

Underlined/Italics text = New topic for further development and research

Contract Posting Examples

[Resource-Specialist-1](#)

[Resource-specialist-0](#)

[Resource-coordinator](#)

[Research-copyright licensing-administrator](#)

[Information-specialist](#)

[Information-analyst](#)

[Database-cataloguing-coordinator](#)

See the Long Term Value

- Don't look at contracts as just a source of money; see them as skills and experience gathering journey
- Look at contract job posting as a checklist of skills you want to learn or improve upon

You have a Contract Job! Now what?

- Learn from your peers
- Become whatever it is you find yourself doing.
- Reach out to professional organizations: library or otherwise
- Explore continuing education and certification bodies
- Keep your interests in mind, explore new options within your contract position
- Suggest projects to gain more experience in or learn more about your position.

What I did as a Contract Employee

- Joined 2 library professional organizations
- Gave 2 presentations on Resource Specializations to said organizations
- Became co-director of programming for SLA Toronto West (2014-2016)
- Held article club on Information & Referral and Human Services work for library professionals
- Obtained AIRS Resource Specialist certification
- Co-wrote 2 short journal articles for SLA TO Courier
- Attended 2 library conferences to learn more
- Was accepted to present on Resource Specialization at OLA 2016 (*got approved as contract employee, full time at time of presentation*)

All of this was done while I was under the impression that my time as a resource specialist was only going to be temporary.

What you can do/Things to Remember

- Not all contracts can become full time
- Leave a lasting impression
- Contract?
- Learn all you can

Keep an Open Mind

- Even if you achieve a full time job, don't rule out certain future contracts.
- They can become full time as well and can provide valuable professional development
- Consider contracts if you are looking for a life change



THE FINE PRINT

Unions, pensions, savings, benefits, etc.

Read your contract

- Are you in a union?
- Is there a collective agreement?
- Are contract employees included?
- What do you get – benefits, vacation, research leave, P.D. funds?
- Can you negotiate a contract?

- Example – academic librarians

Financial planning

**FLEXIBILITY + FREEDOM
=
FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

TAX PREPARATION SERVICE



"I converted my garage to a home office. For tax purposes, my garden mulcher is now a paper shredder, my snow shovel is a mouse pad and my lawn tractor is a company car."

Smooth out your spending

- The **50% rule** you're going to hate (but could save your bacon)
- **Emergency funds** are your friends!
- Credit, **debt** and staying out of \$ trouble
- **Retirement** planning starts now

QUESTIONS?