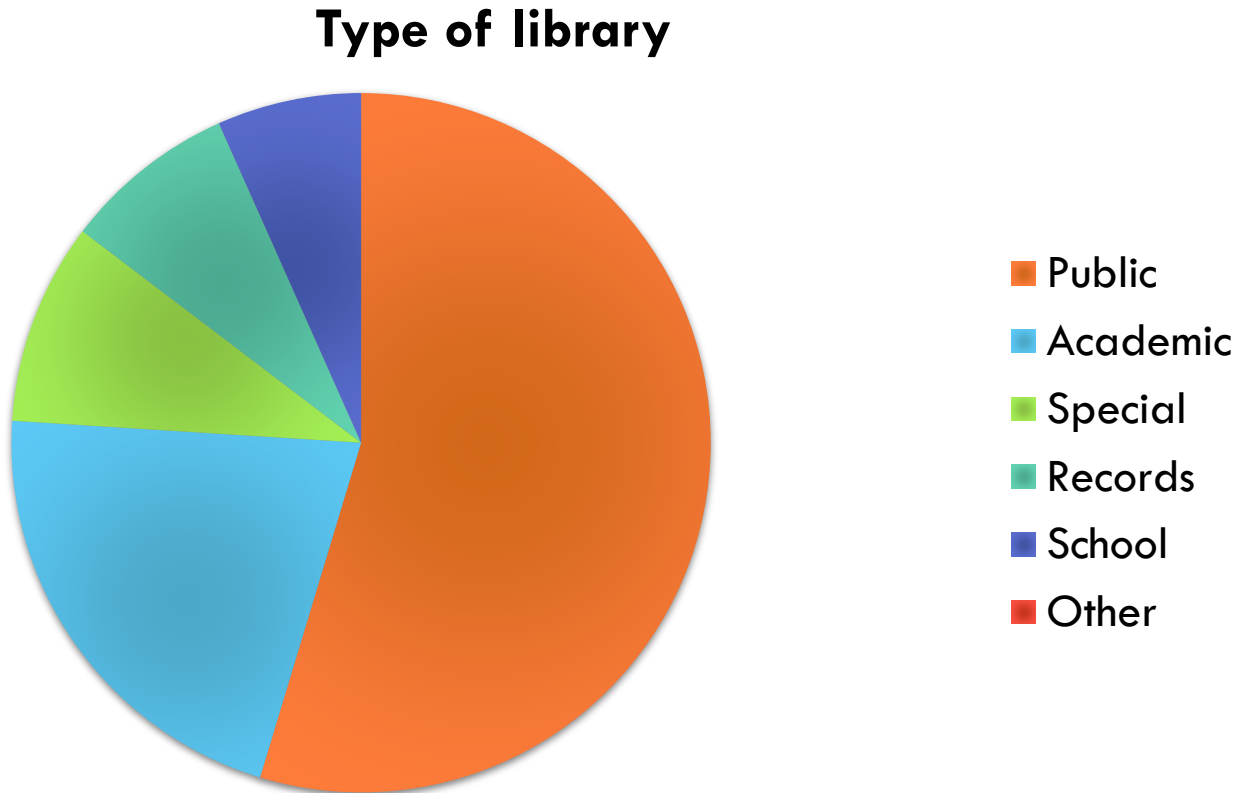




# **WHOSE JOB IS IT ANYWAYS? EXAMINING WORKPLACE DYNAMICS**

Norene James and Lisa Shamchuk  
MacEwan University  
AALT Conference, May 29, 2015

# INTERACTIVE POLL: WHERE ARE YOU FROM?



# OUTLINE

- Reflection: How has YOUR role changed?
- The Survey Says ... How has the Library Technician's role changed?
- The Survey Says ... Perceptions of workplace dynamics
- Ideas to improve workplace dynamics
- Comments and Questions

# HOW HAS YOUR ROLE CHANGED?



# THE ROLE OF THE LIBRARY TECHNICIAN IN 2015



# 1995 VERSUS 2015 CURRICULUM

## 1995 : A/V Techniques

This course consists of familiarization with equipment operation and simple maintenance of equipment as well as various elements of graphic design and display such as mounting, lamination, and lettering.

## 2015 : Information and Society

This course examines the central purpose of libraries in society, and how different issues of social responsibility and justice affect libraries.

# 1995 VERSUS 2015 CURRICULUM

## 1995 : Library Relations

Assisting students to become versatile members of a library staff, this course covers management, planning, staffing and public relations.

## 2015 : Information Resources Management

Students study and examine the governance of libraries, including core values of the library profession, the mission and vision statements, the strategic planning process, and policy development. Change management and project management techniques and principles are used to illuminate key trends affecting libraries and library service.

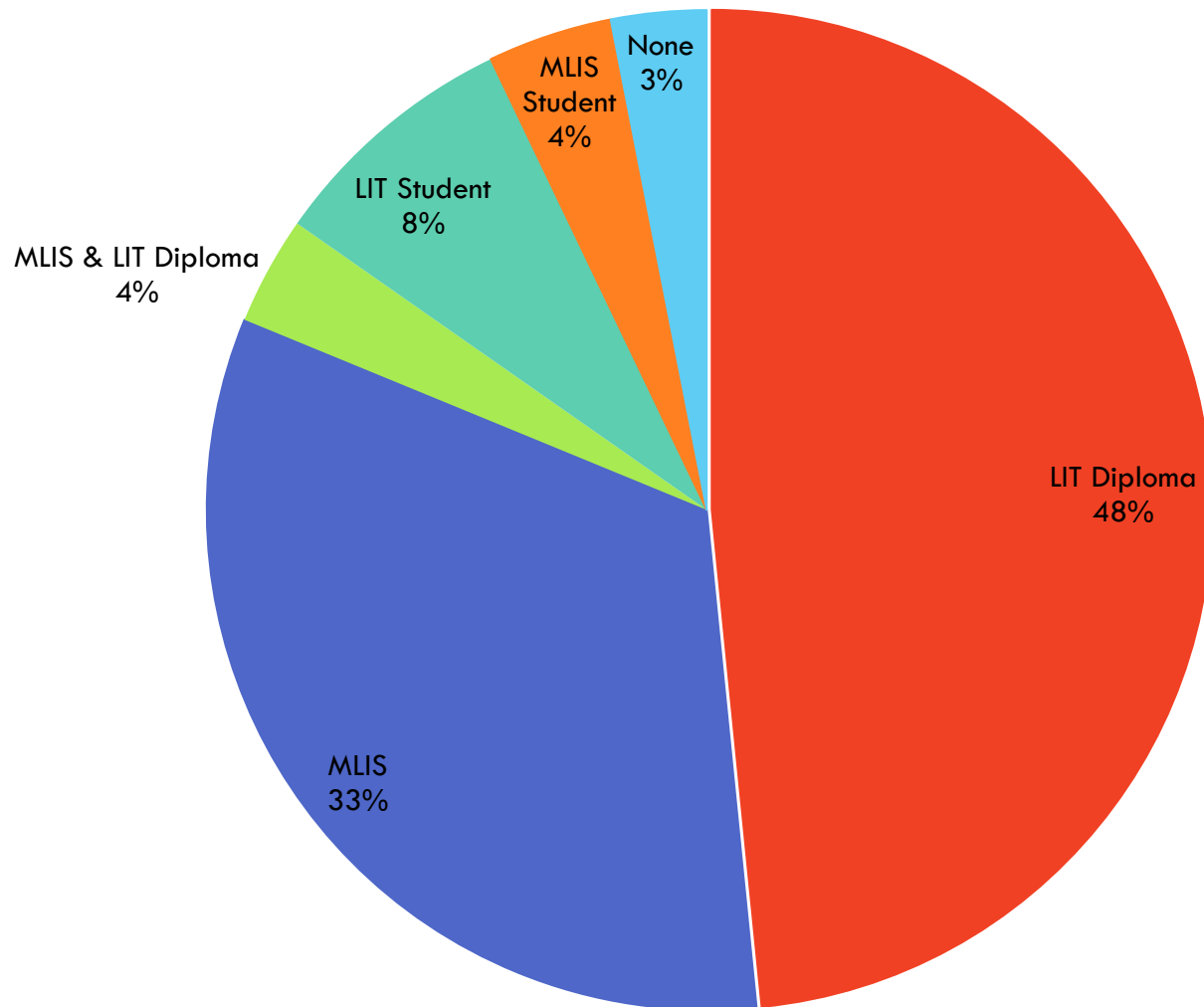


# PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH — IDENTIFY:

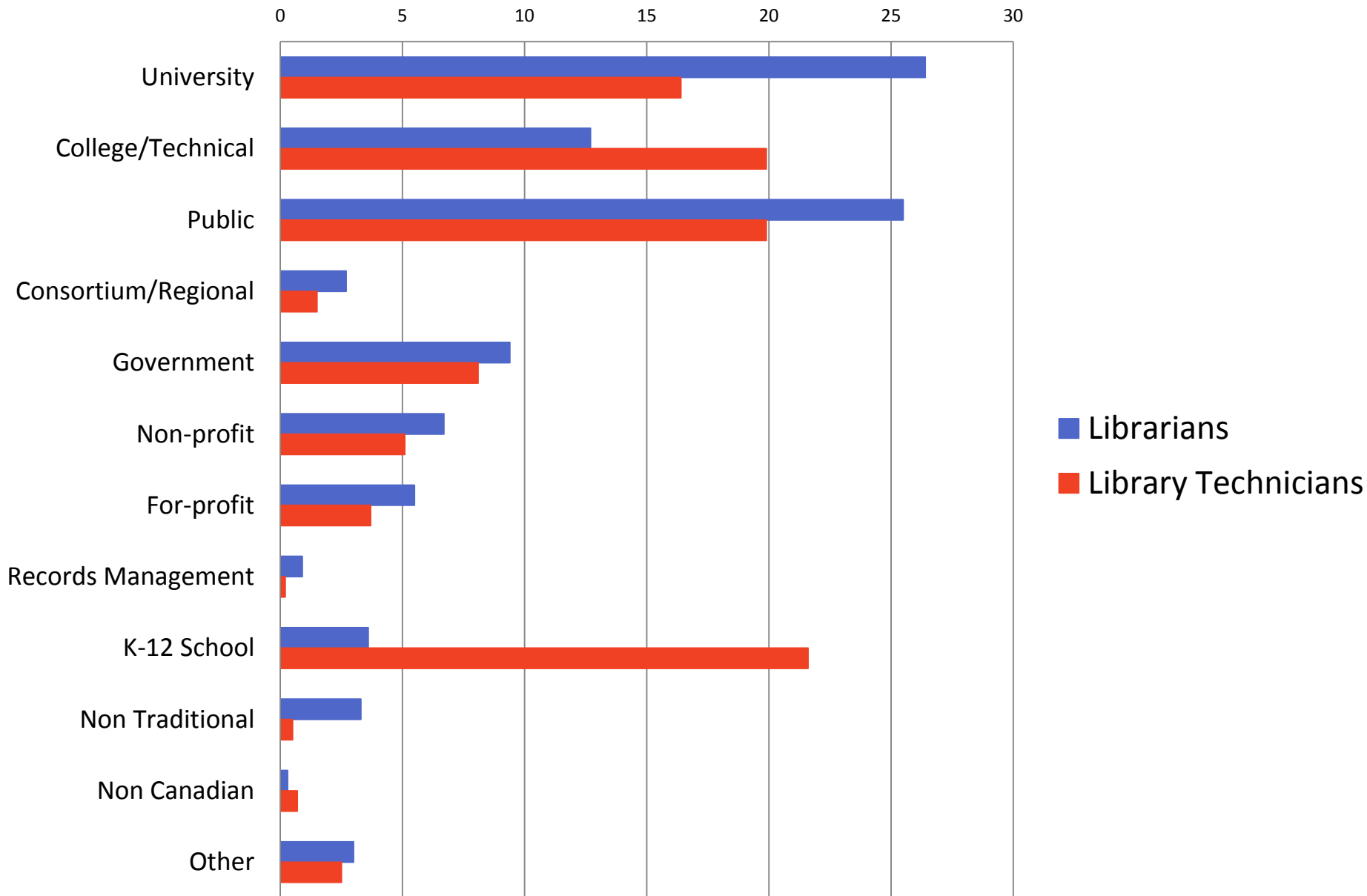
- ☐ Major work responsibilities
- ☐ New tasks added or changed in past 5 years
- ☐ Areas of overlap of roles
- ☐ If tension is present between the two professions as a result of the task overlap
- ☐ How we can improve workplace dynamics between the two professions



# Participant Qualifications

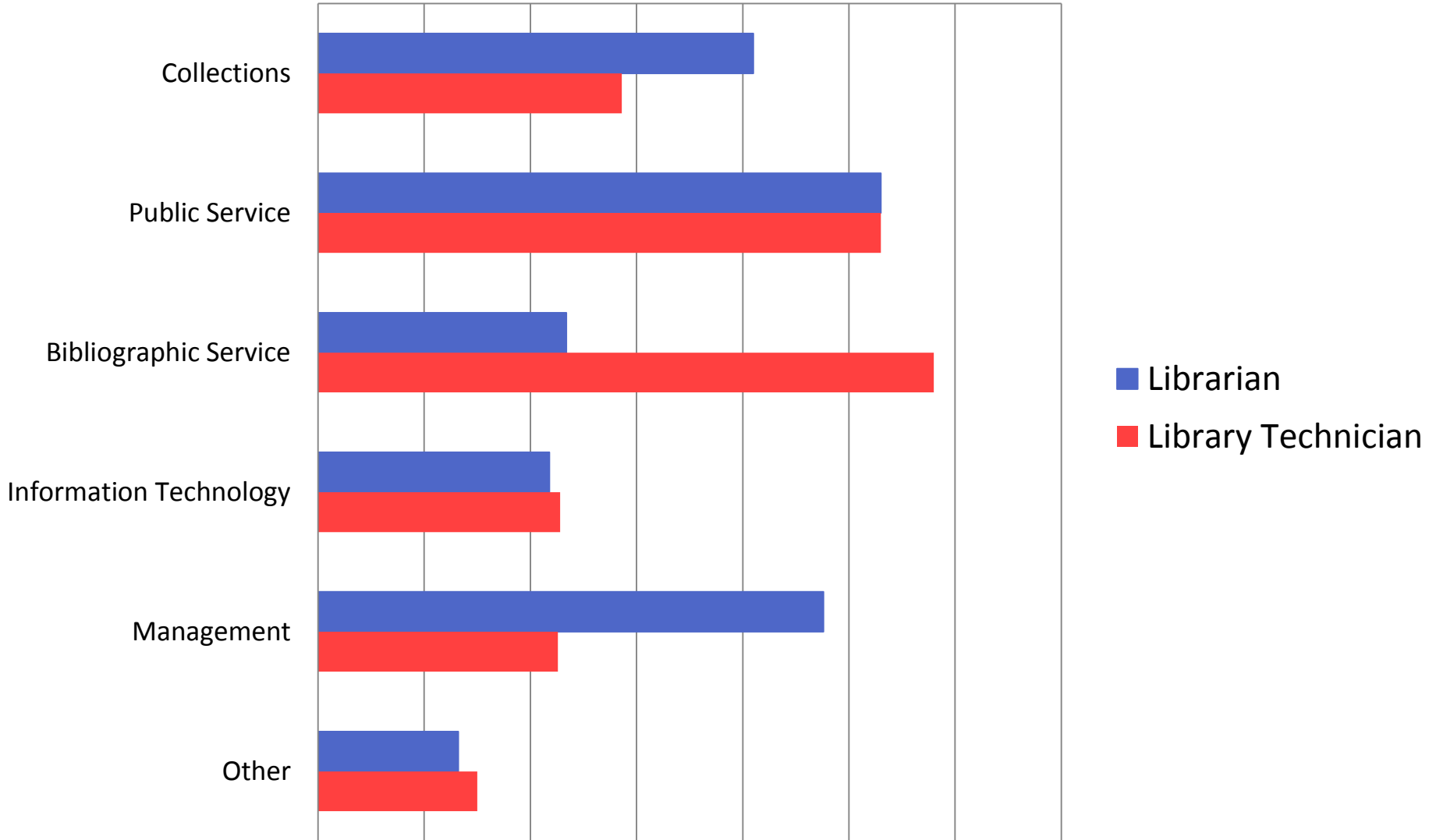


# What Type of Library Do You Currently Work In? (%)

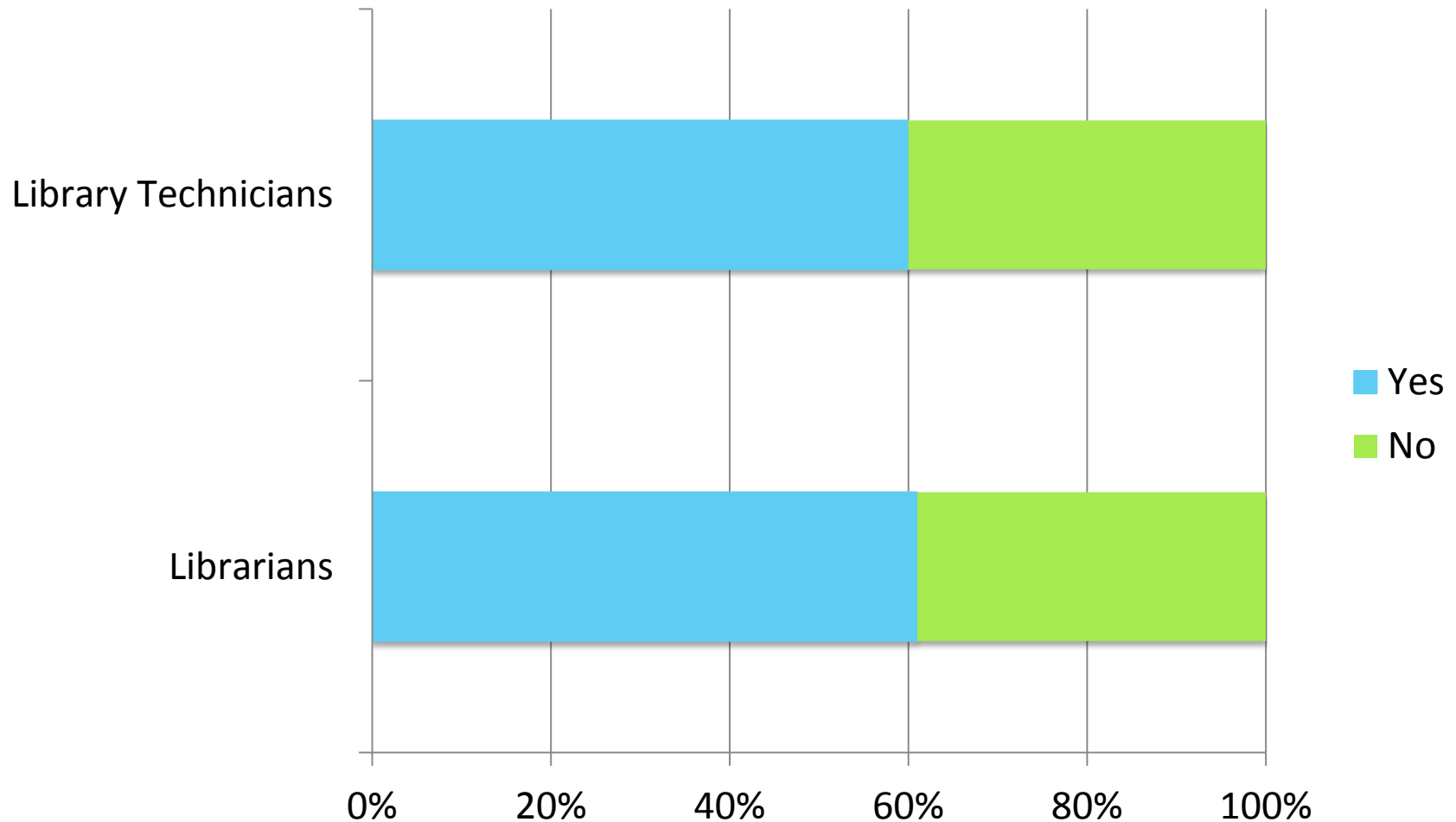


# Major Work Responsibilities (%)

0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% 30% 35%



# HAS YOUR ROLE CHANGED?



## LIBRARIANS ARE DOING MORE...

# administration

[illegible]

# LIBRARY TECHNICIANS ARE DOING MORE...









## NOTABLE QUOTATION...

“The role grows as needs develop.”





## PERCEPTIONS: HIGHLY POSITIVE

**Library Technicians are important to the effective functioning of a library or information setting.**

**93.8% LIBRARIANS AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE**

**Librarians are important to the effective functioning of a library or information setting**

**80.2% LIBRARY TECHNICIANS AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE**

## PERCEPTIONS: HIGHLY POSITIVE

**Library Technicians' concerns or problems should be given the same consideration as those of librarians and/or senior management.**

**92% LIBRARIANS AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE**

**Librarian' concerns or problems should be given the same consideration as those of librarians and/or senior management.**

**92.5% LIBRARY TECHNICIANS AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE**



## PERCEPTIONS: HIGHLY POSITIVE

**I respect Library Technicians and the work they do.**

**95.5% LIBRARIANS AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE**

**I respect Librarians and the work they do.**

**89.8% LIBRARY TECHNICIANS AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE**

## PERCEPTIONS: MOSTLY POSITIVE

**Most of the Library Technicians I know seem competent.**

**86.9% LIBRARIANS AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE**

**Most of the Librarians I know seem competent.**

**79.4% LIBRARY TECHNICIANS AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE**

**High rate of neutrality (8.9% and 13.4%)**

## PERCEPTIONS: MOSTLY POSITIVE

**Most Library Technicians I know strive to improve the workplace**

**77.5% LIBRARIANS AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE**

**Most Librarians I know strive to improve the workplace**

**70.9% LIBRARY TECHNICIANS AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE**

**High rate of neutrality (18.8% and 19.5%)**



## PERCEPTIONS: MIXED

**Library Technicians work as hard as Librarians.**

**80.2% LIBRARIANS AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE**

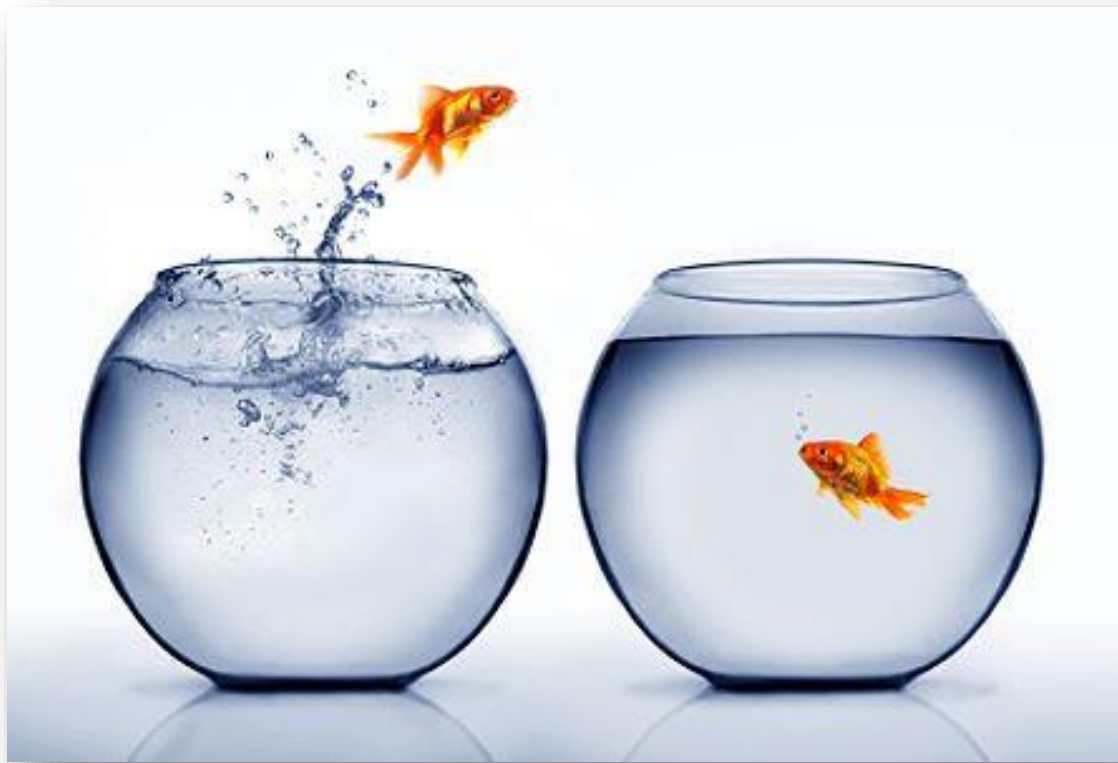
**Librarians work as hard as Library Technicians**

**68.8% LIBRARY TECHNICIANS AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE**

**High rate of neutrality (13.8% and 18.6%)**



# WHAT MIGHT CAUSE TENSION?





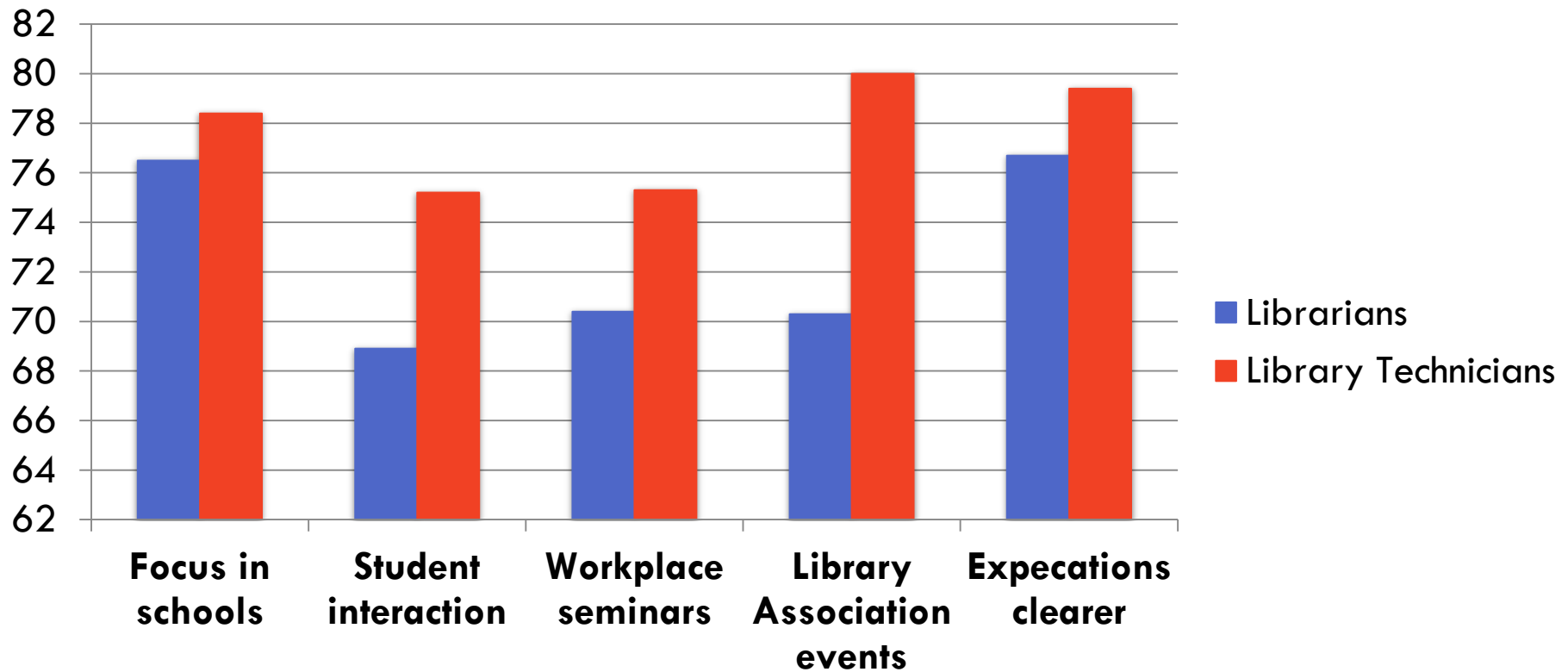
# MAJOR CAUSES OF TENSION



# CREATING A HARMONIOUS CULTURE



## ENCOURAGING POSITIVE TEAM DYNAMICS (%)



# SUGGESTIONS FROM THE RESEARCH

- More focus in library/library technician schools on understanding each other's roles/interaction between schools
- Workplace seminars and workshops arranged by library management to discuss roles.
- Library association events on understanding each other's roles (workshops, conference sessions, social activities, etc.).
- Clearer position descriptions
- Less role delineation: teams involve everyone regardless of role
- Improve communication between groups through formal and informal sharing
- Job shadowing
- Rethink educational divisions

# SUGGESTIONS FROM THE RESEARCH

1. Find the group of people with the same idea as you have on your slip.
2. Discuss the suggestions. What are the benefits? How would you implement this in your library? How could it successfully work?



## SUGGESTIONS FROM THE RESEARCH

3. Find the group of people with the same number as you have on your slip.
4. Take 1 minute to “sell” your suggestion to the group. Tell them why you think your suggestion would work to create a more positive dynamic, and how you would implement it in your library.

# FINAL THOUGHTS?



**THANK YOU!**



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