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## Matching Staff and Projects

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## Matching Staff and Projects

MAC 2014, 4/25/2014

Ruth E. Bryan

University of Kentucky

Special Collections

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# Successful Project Assignment

- Know your staff
- Know your projects
- Match 'em up!



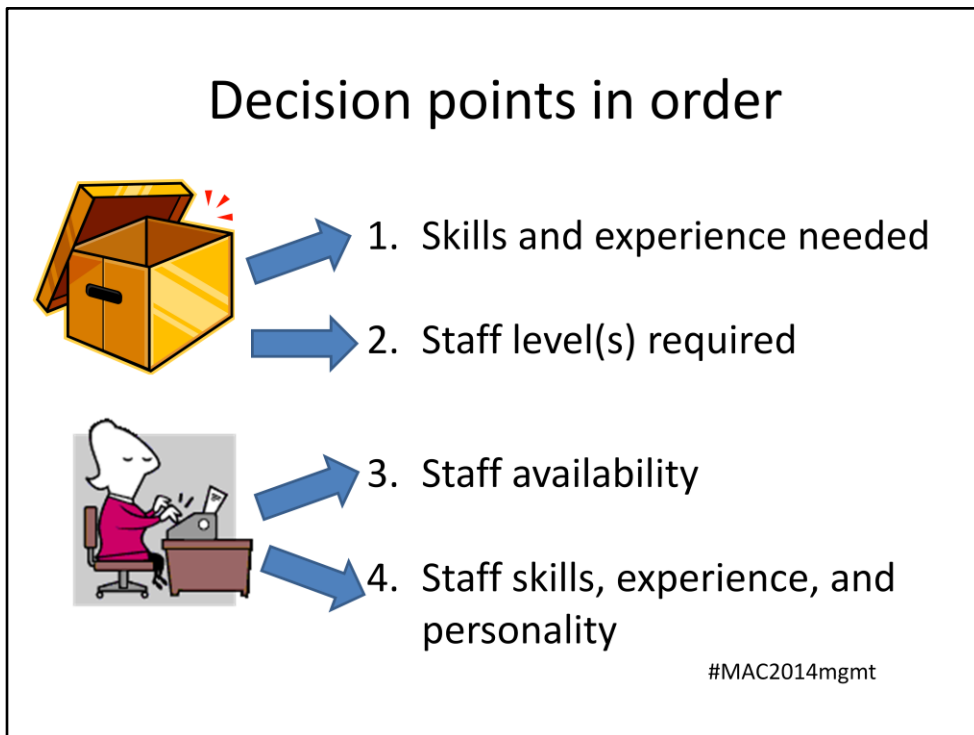
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Administer an archives shop with 7.5 full-time staff and 5-7 students and volunteers.

All 15 positions are at different hierarchical levels, have different types of responsibilities, are scheduled for different amounts of hours per week, and are filled by people with different strengths and weaknesses.

Archives projects also require different types of skills, levels of responsibility, supervision, and time frame.

To both be successful in completing projects and in coaching and building a strong team, the administrator needs to effectively match projects with the available staff best suited for the project.

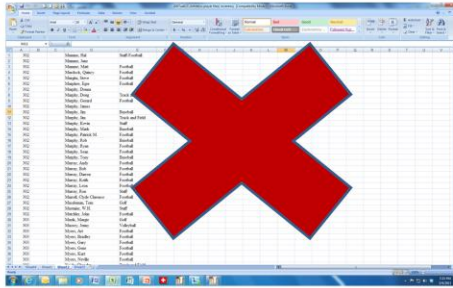


1. What skills and experience are required to successfully undertake and complete the project?
2. What staff level(s) is appropriate to work on this project?
3. Of the group resulting from decisions 1-2, which staff people are available to start a new project, and who is most likely to be able to complete it in a timely fashion, given their work schedules and other priorities?
- 4a. Of the group resulting from decision 3 (appropriate staff level and available to work on the project), which staff people have the skills to comprehend and carry it out with a minimum of oversight? You are very busy and have many other priorities. You don't have a lot of time to spend training or answering questions.

OR

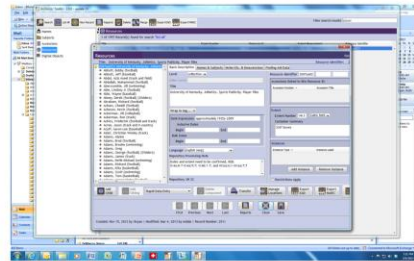
- 4b. Of the group from 3, which staff people would benefit from a project that stretches their skills and experience. Do you have the time to coach a new person through a new project?

## Example: Athletic Player Files



Ack! Gone!

But, can be done  
again and in AT



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Slightly fictionalized but mostly true example. Names and genders of staff have been changed.

Excel spreadsheet listing the contents of the 341 box collection of UK Athletic Player Files has been inadvertently deleted. The collection is highly used and the original processing was performed with funds from a private donor, so the loss needs to be remedied fast. However, the deletion is an opportunity to enter all the folder and item information into Archivists' Toolkit and to integrate additions to the collection.



## Decision 1: Skills needed

- AT data entry
- Typing
- Detail focus
- Alphabetize
- Self-motivation
- Critical thinking



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- Basic knowledge of Archivists' Toolkit data entry.
- Attention to detail.
- Ability to alphabetize.
- Typing.
- Self-motivation to stick with this long-lasting and relatively boring project until it's done.
- Ability to think through any issues that might arise (a folder might not be numbered or a number might be repeated); to ask appropriate questions about handling unusual situations; and to learn from past questions and answers and apply information from one situation to a second, similar situation.

## Decision 2: Staff levels



Staff type	Autonomy level	Role
Faculty	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Determine and carry out projects within library strategic plan.</li> <li>· Guide library educational policy.</li> </ul>
Professional staff	Relatively high	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Determine and carry out projects within library strategic plan and in consultation with direct supervisor.</li> </ul>
Library Specialist	Some	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Overall projects prioritized and assigned by direct supervisor focused on a specific area of responsibility or skill.</li> </ul>
Library Technician	Less	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Projects and project steps prioritized and assigned by direct supervisor; responsible for completing individual project steps.</li> </ul>
Student Assistant	Varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Projects and project steps prioritized and assigned by direct supervisor; responsible for competing individual project steps, but may also be responsible for managing and completing individual projects.</li> </ul>

Project doesn't require high-level of autonomy or high level of professional knowledge and skill.



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## Decision 2: Staff levels









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Student Assistant	Varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Projects and project steps prioritized and assigned by direct supervisor; responsible for competing individual project steps, but may also be responsible for managing and completing individual projects.</li></ul>

The project level most appropriate is library specialist, technician, and/or student assistant.





## Decision 3: Availability (1)









Staff person	Level	Position description
 Enas	Lib Specialist	Two-year accessioning backlog project
 Joan	Lib Specialist	Performs audiovisual processing and reference
 Felicia	Lib Tech, Sr.	Conducts large and/or complex processing projects
 Scott	Lib Tech, Sr.	Payroll. Office supplies. Staffs front desk. Conducts basic processing projects.
 Derek	Lib Tech	Organizes supplies. Assists with exhibits. Receives and stores incoming collections. Staffs front desk. Conducts basic processing projects
 Beth	Student	Processing women's history collections
 Ronnie	Student	Processing architectural collections
 Rhonda	Student	Processing photograph collections

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There are 9 people available that are specialists, technicians, or students.



## Decision 3: Availability (1)







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Out of the 9 people, take specialists off the list; their projects are too important.



## Decision 3: Availability (2)







Staff person	Level	Hours/week and current priorities
 Felicia	Lib Tech, Sr.	40: Accession, process, and move collections in room 401 to make space for rare book catalogers
 Scott	Lib Tech, Sr.	40: Bi-weekly payroll. Almost finished reboxing and entering folder titles for a newly received collection. Will set up publicity event next week.
 Derek	Lib Tech	40: Set up new exhibit next week. Just started reboxing and entering folder titles for a newly received collection.
 Beth	Student	20: In the middle of processing a 20 box collection
 Ronnie	Student	15: Just began survey of about 80 rolls
 Rhonda	Student	10: Almost finished item descriptions in an 800 item photo collection

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Of the 7 remaining people, this project will require someone working full time or 40 hours a week, because it's so large, so take students off the list. Of those working 40 hours a week, Felicia is working on an important project, so she should come off the list.



## Decision 3: Availability (2)



Staff person	Level	Hours/week and current priorities
 Felicia	Lib Tech, Sr.	40: Accession, process, and move collections in room 401 to make space for rare book catalogers
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That leaves 2 staff to choose from. Both Scott and Derek would be good choices. But, what about skills and personality?



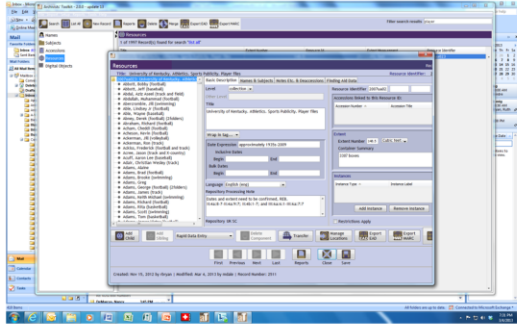
## Decision 4: Skills, Personality

Staff person	Level	Hours/week and current priorities
 Scott	Lib Tech, Sr.	Strengths: Willing to do any job. Grasps concepts and instructions quickly. Asks appropriate questions. Fair typist. Fair handwriting. Good knowledge of AT.  Weaknesses: Poor writer. Sometimes out of office taking care of grandchildren.
 Derek	Lib Tech	Strengths: Willing to do any job. Excellent handwriting. Good spatial orientation skills. Steady hand for mat cutting. Reliable and on time. Fair knowledge of AT.  Weaknesses: Poor typist. Poor writer. Does not easily understand new concepts and instructions. Is flustered by unusual or new situations and asks many questions.

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Both have strengths and weaknesses. This project particularly requires typing skills. Also, because I'm very busy, I need someone who'll take on the project with a minimum of questions. I think Scott is the best person.

# Match!



Staff person

Scott

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I go through this process almost daily. This works even in a small shop, such as where I worked previously, where most of the staff were volunteers.