

Information Management profile

Background

What attracted you to IM

To be candid, it was less a case of me choosing IM and IM choosing me! Having completed my A levels, my first choice universities declined me, which rather incensed my headmistress! Asking where I wanted to study, she proceeded to make a series of calls to secure me a place at Aberystwyth to study a BLib in History and Librarianship & Information Studies.

The plan was to drop the Librarianship after the first year, but this was the mid 1980's. Many graduates were struggling to find jobs and electing to study a vocational post grad qualification to improve their prospects. So I decided to stay the course and stick with the BLib programme.

"Alea iacta est"!

How you got into IM

Successfully graduating in 1987, My first position was as Publications Officer at Charter Consolidated (the UK holding company of the Anglo American Corporation of South Africa). Then moving onto to being a Library Assistant at Merck's Neuroscience Research Centre.

In 1988 I moved to what I consider to be my first career position as Information Officer at Grant Thornton, subsequently moving onto to be Head of Research at KPMG. In 1994 I moved to Morgan Stanley as a Senior Researcher and although I am still there, much has changed in the last 20 years!

Your career

I am now the global head of BIS, Analytics and Publishing at Morgan Stanley. These three businesses retain approximately 600 FTE engaged in the discovery, synthesis, preparation and delivery of information to the business. Colleagues are responsible for the printed production, retention and destruction of those materials. Our Corporate Information Management team own all functions associated with the information life cycle.

The primary focus of my career has been using and managing third party providers of information. This has largely been driven by the needs and expectations of my employers in the financial sector.

I have three relatively recent achievements I consider worthy of note:

1. The development of a workflow tool to manage research workload across a global team in 2007 and still in use today.

2. The development and deployment of a global inventory tool to track and manage over 1000 contracts and close to 3000 individual information products and services.

3. Morgan Stanley was an early adopter of the offshore/outsourced service model. We now have almost 80% of staff and associated transactional workload executed by these service providers.

Whilst some colleagues may not consider this an achievement, I view this as an opportunity for the onshore teams to focus on core competences and develop the IM advisory roles increasingly valued by the business.

The future

I believe the profession and the bodies that represent it could take a more prominent role supporting the IM aspirations of organisations and the economy as a whole.

Information pervades every aspect of our professional and personal lives, yet this is accompanied by a certain amount of apathy. Information and its management are our business; we should step up and take ownership.

Advice

The information community, whilst diminished over the last 10 years remains active and vibrant. You will not meet a nicer group of people than in this profession.

In my experience they are self sacrificing, model corporate citizens, transcending the politics of their organisations. They are primarily concerned with the corporate well being of their employers, using their skills and competences to benefit the wider corporate community.

If you share these qualities and values, get involved. If you do not like what the professional bodies do, or you feel unrepresentative by them? Stop complaining, join in and do something to shape the future of our profession.

Stephen Phillips

Morgan Stanley

May 2014