



## Memo from Deb Schwarz President & CEO

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### LAC Report Card – Survey Results

I want to give a big thanks to the many people who responded to our Survey, The LAC Report Card last month, and to let you know the results of the survey. We were gratified that over 50% of those who received the survey took the time to respond.

LAC has a unique corporate culture and mission, and many of our employees are placed at client sites and have little contact with our corporate staff. That is a major challenge for us and for you, as an employee. We are trying harder, and this survey is but one example, to bridge that gap by communicating more often, and by offering opportunities to interact with us, whether it is virtually or at professional meetings, trade shows, or other occasions where we can actually meet and talk face-to-face.

The purpose of the survey was to give you an opportunity to let us know, anonymously if you preferred, what you liked about working for LAC, what you don't like, and what changes or adjustments you would like us to implement. Of course there are some things we can't change- to death and taxes I would add insurance plans, although we are in close communication with our various providers to negotiate the best deals that we can.

The survey results follow. Please don't feel you need to wait for a survey to tell us what's on your mind. Our emails and contact information are available to you on our website.

***Question: Do you like working at your current job?***

- 62.2% said yes
- 35.2% said yes, with reservations
- 1.0% said no or were indifferent

***Question: How do you rate LAC as an employer?***

- 27.6% Great!
- 52.4% Good
- 16.2% Ok
- 4 people said not good or poor

***Question: If you receive LAC benefits please give us your opinion:***

- 74.3% said the benefits range from very good to just OK – with 29.7% saying they were adequate/satisfactory
- 9.9% feel the benefits are too expensive
- 17.8% either don't use or haven't yet started receiving benefits so withheld judgment

**Question: Please rate the benefits:**

BENEFIT	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS				
	GOOD	ADEQUATE	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	DON'T USE	N/A
Medical	32	14	18		
Dental	27	23	21	8	
Vision Care	15	18	18		
401(k) Program	11	15	18		9
Continuing Education	6	13	10	18	
Professional Development	16	22	10	10	

**Some of the comments we received about the benefits included:**

***“Not enough communication and information about the 401(k)”***

**Response:** Duly noted and we will work on this with our plan administrators.

***“Health benefits are expensive compared to other companies”***

**Response:** Our benefits are divided up regionally with east coast LAC staff receiving benefits from CareFirst BlueCross/Blue Shield and West coast receiving benefits from Aetna. In some states the insurance is more expensive than other states, such as in Louisiana and Illinois. We are bound by the age of our group, experience rating (history of claims) and state mandates.

***“I wasn’t aware we had all of these benefits”***

**Response:** Then we need to do a better job of communicating this to each and every employee. LAC is hiring a full time Human Resources Coordinator who will be resident in the Rockville office but have company-wide responsibilities. The Coordinator will assist our recruiters who have, up until now, taken on the lion’s share of the responsibilities in welcoming new employees and explaining the benefits. We expect to have our new HR coordinator on board before October 31st and once he/she is in the job we will send out an introduction and explanation of the Coordinator’s responsibilities.

***“I work part time and don’t qualify for benefits”***

**Response:** To qualify for benefits you must work a minimum of 30 hours per week.

***“I wasn’t aware of professional development or continuing education benefits”***

**Response:** LAC will pay for one national and one local professional association member dues for each employee. The membership has to be relevant to your job of course. We also will, on an individual basis and highly dependent upon our client, reimburse for some portion of attendance at trade shows or conferences. We also will subsidize, up to \$1,000 dollars in a calendar year for tuition if you decide to take a course relevant to your job or if you decide to go to a graduate program in library science after 1 year of continuous full time employment. Many clients are eager to have our employees grow professionally and are willing to help us pay for opportunities. One of our employees, for example, was

invited to become a member of the Conference Board. LAC and the client split the cost of attendance at professional meetings so our employee can take advantage of this opportunity. Another employee wants to work on more knowledge management projects, and asked us to assist in her certification courses in this area. Again, we and our client split the cost.

LAC is very interested in your professional growth and do all that we can to help. For example, if you would like to work at our booth at a trade show, or if you are called upon to present a paper, we will help by sponsoring or paying your way. The best way to make this happen for yourself is to talk to us, present the opportunity and your reasons for wanting to participate. We are very open to helping on any number of levels.

*Question: If you are assigned to work at a client site, do you feel you are treated differently than the client’s staff?*

- 29.3% feel they are treated differently
- 40.4% feel they are treated the same
- 81.3% feel this question doesn’t apply to them

*Question: What is important to you at work?*

WORKPLACE CONSIDERATIONS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS		
	VERY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	DESIRABLE BUT NOT A FACTOR
Salary	56	40	5
Interesting Work	66	29	5
Co-Workers	40	49	11
Opportunities to Advance	39	40	17
Working Condition	29	56	13
Opportunity	36	38	23

*Question: We define a project manager as another LAC employee who is the leader on the project or assignment. If you are supervised by an LAC employee please give us some feedback. Do you feel your project manager is:*

- 30% said excellent
- 28% said good
- 8% said fair
- 1% said not so good- could use improvement
- 7% said poor
- 27% said doesn’t apply to me

Comments were wide ranging from *“my direct supervisor is excellent and is an important factor to a positive experience at work”* to *“at times there can be personality conflicts with this manager and the PM (Project manager) needs to improve on how to handle folks.”* Some respondents didn’t know who their project manager was or if indeed they had one. Other comments were specific and although anonymous we knew who they were talking about and we have met with our project managers individually to discuss some of the comments we received.

What we can take away from the survey about project managers is that we, LAC, need to do a better job of training and providing both oversight and support to our project managers. They have important and often stressful jobs, and have demands that include managing the day-to-day and working with us to manage client expectations. As contractors, or outsourced personnel, we have to work harder than an average employee. Project managers have to shoulder a lot of responsibilities and exhibit leadership as well as controls over many issues; production, quality, personnel and costs. LAC depends upon our project managers as they are often our “eyes and ears” out in the field. On the other hand, those who work with project managers also have concerns and needs, and we are grateful for everyone who responded with comments in addition to answering the survey. Rest assured we heard you and will work with our project managers to help them do the best job they are able to do.

*Question: How would you rate the manager or supervision in general at the client site if you report to an LAC manager?*

CLIENT SITE SUPERVISION	RESPONDENT PERCENTAGES				
	EXCELLENT	GENERALLY GOOD	INCONSISTENT	POOR	N/A
Everyday Supervision	24.4%	28.6%	5%	2.2%	*
Overall Guidance	23.7%	34.4%	6.5%	2.2%	
Informative About Change	25%	32.3%	10.4%	2.1%	
Being Inclusive	22.6%	32.3%	5.4%	3.2%	
Provides Opportunity to Grow Professionally	24%	24%	6.3%	4.2%	
Communication Skills	23.4%	35.1%	8.5%	4.3%	

\* = 41% don't have a client site project manager and therefore this question was Not Applicable

LAC’s corporate staff often provide support & guidance in addition to or instead of an onsite LAC project manager, or the client. These corporate staff members are called client service managers. If your assignment involves interaction with an LAC client services manager please provide us with feedback:

CORPORATE SUPERVISION	RESPONDENT PERCENTAGES				
	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	N/A
Management Style	21.8%	16.1%	13.2%	1.1%	*
Responsiveness	21.6%	18.9%	10.8%	2.7%	
Reliability	20%	20%	8.6%	2.9%	
Effectiveness	14.7%	20.6%	7.4%	2.9%	
“People Skills”	21.1%	23.9%	8.5%	1.4%	

\* = 47% don't have a corporate client services manager and therefore this question was Not Applicable

The comments we received:

***“I don’t think I have a client services manager”***

More than one person commented that they didn’t know they had a client services manager.

***“I have not received a performance review and my anniversary date has past. Also no one checks with me on a regular basis about current challenges, problems and overall guidance. Fortunately the other LAC manager on our team has been willing to step into this role and provide mentoring and leadership when I have had questions.”***

**Response:** Every account has a client services manager, the fact that this person didn't know we had a manager disturbs us. We will do a better job of identifying these managers. In addition, we will check in more frequently with our managers to ensure they are working with each and every account. Every account matters to us regardless of the size! We recognize this as an area we need to work on and improve.

**Question: Would you recommend LAC to someone looking for work?**

- 60.6% Definitely
- 36.4% Yes but with some caveats
- 1.0% Probably not
- 2.0% Absolutely not

**Question: Would you recommend LAC to a potential client?**

- 74.7% Yes
- 17.2% Yes but with reservations
- 6.1% Only under certain conditions
- 2.0% Probably not

The following are selected, representative comments and our responses we will share with you:

***“I am glad that LAC offers medical and dental benefits. What I'm not glad about is Carefirst's 50% reimbursement plan which results in lots cash going out of my pocket as I strain to meet their deductible.”***

**Response:** As LAC offers benefits in many different states, we don't have a “national” plan per se. We are working with GevityHR on the West coast and our providers on the East coast to conduct a review and evaluation of the providers in all of the states we have employees in. Frankly, as soon as we get a handle on it the rules or policies seem to change. Obviously we are not alone as health care and health insurance are two major issues for all Americans. We will continue to research this and insist that the companies we work with provide us with all of the choices possible. We are similarly affected on all fronts but we will do our best to provide reasonable and comprehensive coverage.

***“On the whole benefits are good. However, having sick leave would be very nice and the health insurance coverage is expensive.”***

**See our response** to the first question regarding the expense of the health insurance. As far as sick leave is concerned, we offer Paid Time Off (PTO) that combines sick leave and personal days exclusive of paid legal holidays for those of you who qualify for benefits. This means you can take days off for vacation, appointments or sick time, with no questions asked. We did a lot of research before we went with PTO versus sick leave and

vacation time. Many companies now offer PTO rather than defining sick time or vacation days.

***“As my first library-related job since graduating I was hoping to gain some experience in a variety of ways. This doesn’t seem to be happening. Despite my education and working background the management doesn’t want to give me the opportunity to grow and doesn’t trust me to do much of anything. This is true for others as well as for myself.”***

**Response:** Without knowing more of the facts behind this comment we can’t provide you with specific advice, however, we offer you the opportunity to talk to your client services manager, or one of the LAC corporate staff in either our West or East coast offices. In some ways, depending upon the project, we may be bound by the very nature of the work we are doing. For instance, some of our projects have specific tasks that you may not consider “professional” work. We usually lay out the tasks and responsibilities to each person who chooses to accept a position at the time of being hired. If you feel you were misled as to the nature of your job then we are happy to discuss with you. Please don’t hesitate to contact any of us, or email me directly if you wish. I, as well as the other LAC corporate staff will treat any such communication with discretion.

***“LAC treats my co-workers and me with a higher degree of respect than the contractors I encountered in my previous library/information positions. I find that general purpose contractors do not understand librarianship and provide a lack of professional and administrative support at their library/information contracts which undercuts the long-term sustainability of these contracts, and is detrimental to the health of our profession.”***  
***“Have enjoyed working with the LA-based LAC staff.”***

**Response:** Thanks for the encouraging words!

***“I joined LAC recently and would have welcomed a more systematic orientation to the corporate office and staff prior to being full time at the client site.”***

**Response:** Point well-taken! We will work on that, and agree we could improve our orientation process.

***“My team lead is fantastic and listens to and respects my input. She is excited about my work and is a positive force in the office.”***

**Response:** Fantastic – and so glad to hear it!

***“I would not mind having access to an organization chart that could let me know who I need to contact for any issues I may have. An accurate organization chart helps make things clearer for remote employees.”***

**Response:** Excellent suggestion! We will provide one soon. We are in the process of hiring a human resources coordinator in our Rockville office and a projects administrator in the LA office. As soon as they new hires are completed will provide everyone with a current organization chart.

*“This has been a great experience and I am proud to be a part of LAC’s staff. Although at times the staff could have better communication skills I find that I am very happy here and look forward to the rest of my time with LAC.”*

**Response:** Thanks! We will work harder on our communication skills – always an area that we can improve upon.

This concludes our survey report. As you can see we have some work to do, and we will report back to you on our progress and any other new changes or developments in the company that are of interest to you.

Once again – our heartfelt thanks! Your input is invaluable and please don’t feel you need to wait for a survey to voice your opinions, comments, complaints and praise! We are listening. As your president and the owner of LAC, I care deeply about every aspect of this company, and want to hear from you.

On a final note, at the present time the economic conditions of our country, indeed the world, are unsettling and frightening. Everyone wants to know if their job is safe. We are in the contract business where we serve at the pleasure of our client – and are subject to budget cuts, funding issues and the general health of our clients’ business each and every day. This is nothing new to us and is a fact of contractor life even when the economy is at its best. LAC is a diversified company with as many private sector clients as government contracts. We do our best to maximize our company’s health and well-being through that diversification. We also try to keep our employees’ best interests at heart. If there is an opportunity for any of our staff to join the client on a full time basis (we hesitate to use the word permanent!) then we try to make that happen. When projects end we do our best to find our employees a new project or other work. In short – we are healthy, we are growing, even in this current economic downturn, and working hard at finding new opportunities each and every day to ensure that the work continues with little or no disruption.

*Thanks for being a part of our growth and our future!*

If you would like to contact me you may reach me at any time; dschwarz@libraryassociates.com or my cell: 310-400-4118.