Training For Service
Access Services Conference 2012

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Outline

• Our Challenge
• Online Module
• Workshop
• Customer Service Team
• The Future
Our Challenge

Over a dozen service points
Our Challenge

A game of telephone
Homemade or storebought?
Recipe for Training

• Define audience
• Identify core values
• Choose delivery method
• Develop content
• Find the hook
• Let it evolve
Define Audience
Core Values

- Represent the Library
- Find the Answer
- Respect the Patron
Choose delivery method
Develop Content
Represent the Library

Look Ready to Serve

Wearing headphones or consuming food at a service desk is absolutely not appropriate.
Online Module

Customer Service

An essential duty of any MLibrary job is providing high-quality customer service to library patrons.

Key elements to good service:
• Represent the library
• Find the answer
• Respect the patron

Our training module
The Results
The Next Step: Creating a DIY Workshop
Brainstorming

• Expand upon main principles covered in online training.
• Have a “hook” that will help create a unique workshop.
• Do not bore your audience!
Developing a concept

• Focus on an aspect of online training that received positive feedback from both staff and administration.

• Draft outlines for several different topics with desired learning outcomes.

• Discuss pros and cons of each – combine ideas.

• Finalize a specific topic: customer service as acting.
Finding the “hook”

- MOVIE THEME!
- “IT’S ALIVE!”: CLIPS! STILLS! POSTERS! POPCORN!
Finding the “hook”

Choose a catchy title that showcases content and theme.

Best Performance in a
Customer Service Role:
Acting on the Job
Designing the Best Performance Workshop

- Clarify expectations of service for organization.

- Philosophy of customer service as acting.
Designing the Best Performance Workshop

- Cover the main concepts in the context of service as acting:
  - Represent the Library
    - First impressions / appear ready to serve
  - Respect the patron
    - Regardless of patron status / speaking respectfully / transaction length / involve the patron / respect patron privacy
  - Find the answer
    - Asking for help
Designing the Best Performance Workshop

• Focus on Application – “Situations that Require Acting.”

• Complicated Transactions / Basic Transactions / Phone Transactions / Unhappy Patrons / Having a Bad Day / Can’t Play the Role / Disagreement with Policy or Procedures / Getting Along with Coworkers

• Lines of Dialogue
Keeping participants engaged

- Group discussion between sections.
  - Facilitate – don’t let it become horror story hour.
- Use amusing clips.
- Choose photos related to each concept.
  - Think “outside the library.”
Keeping participants engaged
Keeping participants engaged
Keeping participants engaged

Complicated Transactions
Role-playing scenarios: take the stage!
You are a busy professor trying to submit a grant proposal. You really need this book to meet the deadline, so you find it in the library and take it to the Circulation Desk.

You find the user account is blocked due to an overdue recalled item. How do you use acting to explain the block without upsetting the patron?
Let it evolve

• Develop language and metaphors that may help participants remember techniques.

• Experiment with workshop format (e.g., two sections may work better than three).

• Adapt role playing based on participant reaction (e.g., language should focus on service, not procedure).
Wide range of audience

- Designed for both new and seasoned regular library staff.
- Be accommodating: evening workshops and workshops in different campus locations.
- Any regular staff from any department could register.
- Supervisors who attended wanted a version their student employees could attend – workshop can be easily tweaked based on participant make-up.
Participant Feedback

“I enjoyed acting out the customer service themes. I also enjoyed looking at customer service with an actor's perspective; that we are ourselves, but we are a part of ourselves that is representing the library.”

“It was not a common sense training on customer service. There was actually very useful advice…those of us who knew the basics of customer service weren't bored.”
Customer Service Team
Library Re-Organization

• New re-organization at the UM Libraries
• Library’s involvement in Learning and Teaching
• From a collection-centered to a patron-centered library
• Ease of Access
Formation of the team

- Why a customer service team?
- Representatives from different service departments
- The scope of the team
Ongoing Initiatives

- Customer Service Survey for co-workers
- Customer Service Survey for patrons
- Desk Etiquette for student workers
- Interdepartmental Workshop
- Reaching out to other departments
What We Learned

• Have the administration on board
• Start with departments that directly interact with patron
• Moving to others who indirectly influence the work
• Expand to all departments, even those that do not interact with patron.
• Make Customer Service an essential aspect of the job description
Keep In Mind

- Be aware of staff morale and that change is not easy
- Be patient and let the cake bake!!!
Questions?