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Where is the Hospitality in Your Library?

*Library of Michigan's Loleta Fyan Small and Rural
Library Conference
April 30, 2014*

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Kresge Business Administration Library
Ross School of Business (University of Michigan)

Presentation Overview

- Introduction
- Hospitality & Self-Service
- Two Spaces of a Library
- Hospitality at Kresge Library
- Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes
- Closing Thoughts

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Introduction

- My Diverse Employment Background
 - ~ Spent 3 weeks and 1 day working in the JC Penney Manager Training Program....
 - ~ Worked at Special Libraries, Archives and Academic Libraries
 - ~ Worked for a Library Software Company (Innovative)
 - ~ Been in Technical Services and Systems
 - ~ Moved to Collections and Administration
 - ~ Always have been able to keep close with the patrons or end-users

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Introduction

- Some key takeaways
 - ~ This is my approach and my philosophy about libraries and library services.
 - ~ Academic libraries are all the same – they have different funding, staffing, student needs and faculty requests.
 - ~ What works at one, may not work at another.
 - ~ ***DON'T RICH-ROD YOUR LIBRARY!***
 - ~ How can we frame problems and opportunities to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our patrons.

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Introduction

- The view of an iconoclast.
- Borrow this line from Pirates of Penzance:
Frederic (to his fellow pirates): Individually, I love you all with affection unspeakable; but, collectively, I look upon you with a disgust that amounts to absolute detestation.
- From Gilbert and Sullivan's Pirates of Penzance (or The Slave of Duty), 1879
- From: http://math.boisestate.edu/gas/pirates/pirates_lib.pdf

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Hospitality & Self-Service

- Hospitality, n. The virtue which induces us to feed and lodge certain persons who are not in need of food and lodging.
–Ambrose Bierce, *The Devil's Dictionary*, 1911
- Hospitality is making your guests feel at home, even though you wish they were.
– Unknown
- Share with God's people who are in need.
Practice hospitality.
–Romans 12:13

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Hospitality & Self-Service

- Disney Model
 - ~ Excellent customer service
 - ~ Excellent attention to detail
 - ~ Things just run beautifully smooth
 - ~ You really feel like they care about every person
 - ~ You really feel that they care about YOU!

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Hospitality & Self-Service

- Nordstrom Model
 - ~ Employee Handbook is one card
 - ~ “Our number one goal is to provide outstanding customer service”
 - ~ Our only rule: “Use good judgment in all situations”
 - ~ See Spector’s The Nordstrom Way to Customer Service Excellence, 2005

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Hospitality & Self-Service

- Hall of Fame Hospitality Desk.
 - ~ Over Hall of Fame Weekend, the “Hospitality Desk” manages all events
 - ~ Used to be called Information Desk
 - ~ Name was changed to the Hospitality Desk and Crew instill a culture of taking care of people
 - ~ *The goal is to make things right*



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Hospitality & Self-Service

- Hospitality can be modest and still be appreciated and useful



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Hospitality & Self-Service

- In general, Hospitality is...
 - ~ It is being **available** and **visible**
 - ~ It allows **you** to change what your patrons can expect from the library
 - ~ It is treating **your users like customers** (no matter what we call them)
 - ~ It is **treating people well**, even before you know **who** they are
 - ~ It is **not** simply luxury or excess

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Hospitality & Self-Service

- Librarians & library staff are **amazing** at providing service
- In many academic settings, the libraries are the element that people are most fond of in reviews and surveys
- In communities, libraries are often considered one of the most commonly cited benefit of a city or town
- In many ways, libraries are well suited to focus on hospitality

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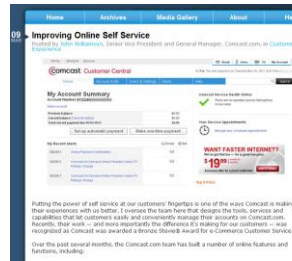
Hospitality & Self-Service

- With the advent of electronic resources and discovery layers – we have worked very hard to make the library mostly self-service
- We have to be very careful – because we could be leading to...

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Hospitality & Self-Service



Comcast is pushing "self service" as their new and improved service model

Putting the power of self-service at our customers' fingertips is one of the ways Comcast is making their experiences with us better. Over the years, we've had through the trials, services and capabilities that let customers easily and conveniently resolve their issues on Comcast.com. Recently, that work is now more thoroughly optimized for helping our customers – as recognized as Comcast was awarded a Bronze Service Award for e-Commerce Customer Service.

Over the past several months, the Comcast.com team has built a number of online features and features, including:

<http://blog.comcast.com/2012/03/improving-online-self-service.html>

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Hospitality & Self-Service

- The Self-Service Airport... (ATL 7/11/12)



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Hospitality & Self-Service

- The Self-Service Hotel...



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Hospitality & Self-Service

- That is great when people **know what they want**
- This is not great when people don't know what they need
- We have seen a change in services and removal of the reference desk (among others)
- This is when we have a problem...and an opportunity

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Hospitality & Self-Service

- So maybe what we need is...



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Two Spaces of a Library

- How do they see us?
- Storage or Service?



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Two Spaces of a Library

- There are two distinct spaces in a modern library:
 - ~ The Physical Space
 - ~ The Ethereal Space
- Both are critical for our work and for libraries everywhere
- Both are critical for considering outreach activities with our collections (esp. in business)

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Two Spaces of a Library

- The Physical space of the library is used for quiet study and contemplation



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Two Spaces of a Library

- The Physical space of the library is used for managing printed collections...
- **Which ARE STILL RELEVANT and USEFUL!**
- But its not the biggest priority with building projects.



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Two Spaces of a Library

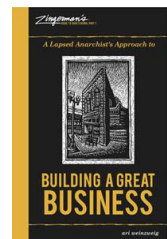
- The Ethereal Space of the Library is where
 - ~ We connect with users
 - ~ We provide outreach
 - ~ We showcase our value to communities
 - ~ We make sense of "it all"
 - ~ We become the "Shell Answer Man"
 - ~ **We SHINE**

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Two Spaces of a Library

- The Ethereal Space is **boundaryless**
 - ~ 12 Natural Laws of Building a Great Business
 - ~ #9 – Success Means You Get Better Problems (p.54)



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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- Kresge Library: Independent Library at University of Michigan - Ross School of Business (3700 FTE)
- Staff of 20 FT people (8 librarians, 10 staff) with 4.5 FTE of temporary staff
- Open 108 service hours a week during the Fall and Winter terms***
- <http://tinyurl.com/KresgeLibrary>
- <http://www.bus.umich.edu/KresgeLibrary/downloads/annualreports/KresgeAnn2011.pdf>

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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- Joined the library in 2005 and became the director in 2006
- ***My goal as director has been to create the library I would want to use***
- I am more concerned about what our students and faculty need than what libraries are doing elsewhere (*instead of keeping up with other ABLD libraries*)

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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- **Hospitality and Empathy** are KEY TERMS for me
- Empathy has to work both ways – in **balance**
 - ~ More empathetic towards patrons – more work for staff
 - ~ More empathetic towards staff – maybe less services for patrons



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- We are a very different academic library
- Very strong proponent of the **Nordstrom Way**
- Always encourage staff to take care of the problem as best we can and sort out details later
- We want to be the service champions at the Ross School
- Draw examples from everywhere, not just our type of library
- ***DON'T RON JOHNSON YOUR LIBRARY!***

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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- It is a 100% service orientation for the library
- We are flexible to take care of the immediate needs of the school
- ***A student's perception of Kresge might be equally influenced by interaction with me, a reference librarian, a staff member or a student temp***
- ***Very important to share values – even with different roles at the Library***
- ***To this end, all staff are listed in our annual report***

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Hospitality at Kresge Library

Maybe it looks like this

Sign outside Regents Park Apartments in Chicago

We want a concierge & repair service 24/7



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It never looks like this...

Though in libraries, we deal with **cost containment** targets more than **increased revenue goals**.



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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- Is there a cost associated with being a hospitable library?
 - ~ Some are possible because of our size and budget
 - ~ Some have relatively modest cost with a good return
 - ~ Some have virtually no cost and a good return

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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- Some are possible because of our size and budget
 - ~ Embedded Librarians for MAP

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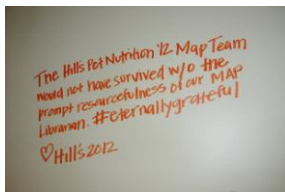
- Embedded Librarians for MAP & Action-Based Learning
 - ~ This is not one of my ideas – but it grew as the school developed
 - ~ Action-based Learning programs like MAP involve student groups working with corporate, governmental and nonprofit organizations
 - ~ They often need very specialized research assistance
 - ~ We assign librarians to each group to make it easier for the teams
 - ~ We get a lot of “return business” after MAP is over

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- From the MBA surveys:
 - ~ “Access to a dedicated librarian during MAP was AWESOME”
 - ~ I had no idea until MAP how awesome the staff at Kresge is



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- Some have relatively modest cost with a good return
 - ~ Supplies for Students
 - ~ Course pack distribution
 - ~ Support for Case Competitions

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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- Need Supplies?
- Similar to many hotels that provide toothbrushes, etc. to travelers who forget items
- We provide office supplies (name tents, envelopes, paper (for case interviews), pens, earplugs)
- We used to charge (cost recovery) – but it was more work to track the money

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- We got creative in obtaining the supplies.
- Green Clean Day & eBay
- Misprints from Marketing companies



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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- Kresge runs the Ross Course pack service
- By bringing all hands on deck – we do a much better job of getting students quickly through the pickup line



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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- Some have virtually no cost and a good return
 - ~ Supporting Recruiting
 - ~ Flexibility With Staff
 - ~ Flexibility With Students
 - ~ Our General Demeanor!

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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- Recruiters conduct most interviews in group study rooms in our building
- They need all sorts of services:
 - ~ Unlocking offices
 - ~ Providing a calculator for students for case interview
 - ~ Printing items
 - ~ Power cord for a recruiter's Blackberry or Cell Phone

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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- **Being hospitable and flexible with staff**
- Corey's theory
 - ~ *If I am flexible with you, please be flexible with our patrons*
 - ~ *If I am not flexible with you, then you will not be expected to be flexible with our patrons*
- Balancing **Empathy** between all staff and patrons
- Ties to Positive Organizational Scholarship
- **Important for Modeling Good Behavior!**

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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- **Being hospitable and flexible with students**
- **Space is very tight at Ross** (as everywhere)
 - ~ On numerous occasions, we will make our conference room available for student group meetings – even after hours
- Many of our students need to meet on **weekends and evenings**
 - ~ We meet when we can and ensure that library staff get flex time to compensate them for the odd schedule

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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- The most important element of hospitality is our demeanor
 - ~ We smile
 - ~ We wear name tags when working in the public
 - ~ To a person at Kresge, we reach out to patrons who look like they need help
 - ~ This is fairly unique at Ross
 - ~ So much has to do with the little things (Zombieland Rule #32 – Enjoy the Little Things)

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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- Some things were tried and discontinued
- Maybe they were not popular...or too popular to support
- Being entrepreneurial means trying things out and seeing what is received well by the school
- ***“Do not get married to the results”*** – Bernard Seeman (many times)

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Sometimes we correct the problem – but it is still just not right!

We really have to trust ourselves to know if it is working or not.



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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- Kresge Library Coat/Bag Check
 - ~ Students were hesitant to take jackets and book bags to the Interview waiting area
 - ~ They left them in the library while they went on their interview and we noticed an increase in thefts
 - ~ We created a coat check at the Circ Desk
 - ~ It became too big a distraction and we ended up cancelling the program

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Failure is an absolutely important ritual in being entrepreneurial.

If you never want to fail – you will never try anything great!



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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- In Summary....
 - ~ Make all people feel welcome at your library
 - ~ Treat patrons the way that you would like to be treated (Golden Rule)
 - ~ “Point with your feet, not with your arm”
 - ~ **Create the library you would want to use!**

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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- In Summary....
 - ~ When times are hard and resources (space, budget and personnel) are tight...**being hospitable can be difficult**
 - ~ We cannot always control how we are treated and what resources we are given...**but we can control how we respond**
 - ~ Yep...it's a cliché...but it works

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Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes

- Patron-Driven Services is a new concept.
- So much of the library literature has been focused on figuring out how to get patrons to use our services
- Maybe...JUST MAYBE...we are providing the wrong service
- Are we offering what they want?

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Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes

- Patron-Drive Acquisition has been all the rage recently
- Why buy books that have a 50% chance of NEVER being used (Academic problem) – instead let the patrons decide
- Buy just in time resources vs. just in case

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Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes

- Patron-Driven Services is the same model
- PDS means:
 - ~ Being more open to what our community needs
 - ~ Listening to what they are asking for
 - ~ Not fearing success (which brings more people to the library)
 - ~ Being viewed as a facilitator, not an obstacle

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Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes

- High-Class vs. Low-Class Problems
- This can really define what we want to look like to ourselves and the outside world
- What type of problems do we want to deal with?

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Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes

- Low-Class Problem questions:
 - ~ How do we get people to the Reference Desk?
 - ~ How do we get people to check out books (that we select)?
 - ~ How do we get people to use electronic resources that we select?
 - ~ How do we get people into our classes & programs?

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Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes

- High-Class Problem questions:
 - ~ How do we build capacity to meet our patron needs?
 - ~ How do we get expand the space to fit all the people into our library?
 - ~ What services might we stop doing to meet the reference needs of our patrons (embedded librarianship)?
 - ~ How do we embrace technology as our patrons use it?

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Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes

- High-Class Problem questions:
 - ~ How do we stay positive when budgetary and space constraints are providing constant pressure on our ability to serve our patrons as we have in the past?

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Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes

- Problem with “YES” can be that we lose ownership of the transaction
- HOWEVER, what we lose in ownership, we gain in creating an advocate
- With YES, we can create “Boosters and Ambassadors” for the library and the organization

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Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes

- Creating Boosters or Ambassadors
 - ~ Has love (not like) for the organization
 - ~ Has been able to get some unique service or interaction with the organization
 - ~ Can put their name on the list of those who publically support the organization
 - ~ Has had an amazing experience that is worth sharing
 - ~ Has been told “Yes...we can do that”

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Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes

- Creating Boosters or Ambassadors
 - ~ Even in a world where Kresge Library is (probably) losing significant space, the administrators see **the service we provide as being key to the academic enterprise**

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Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes

- Managing Expectations
- **“No organization has become great or maintained greatness by managing expectations” – me (lots of times)**
- **No organization has ever developed passionate users by managing expectations**
- This is the time when poor customer service is winning!

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Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes

- Heed the lessons from Chase and Sanborn!
- An early market leader for home coffee, they instituted small changes to the product to reduce the cost
- The collective effect of these cuts was destroying the quality of the coffee
- Now, Charlie McCarthy would not touch it
- The Race to the Bottom!

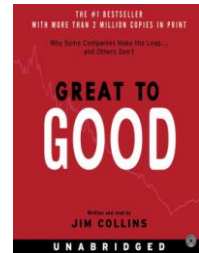
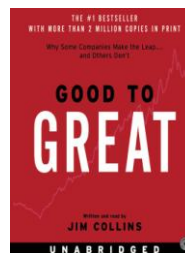


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- What book do we want to model?



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Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes

- Power of Yes at Kresge Library has enabled us to be the customer service champs at Ross
- Power of Yes has brought to us new projects and opportunities that we would not have gotten before
- People WANT to work with us – not have to

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Closing Thoughts

- What does hospitality mean at Kresge?
 - ~ It means serving the students, faculty and other staff the best we can
 - ~ It means listening to their needs without considering what other libraries are doing
 - ~ It means not being bogged down with what other departments are doing
 - ~ It also means that we cannot take on everything (coat check & printing support)

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Closing Thoughts

- Factors beyond your control (especially space and budget) can easily thwart enthusiasm for providing service
- However, we can never be expected to do more than our budget and space allow – Focus on what you CAN do!



Sometimes we have as much control as sports fans

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Closing Thoughts

- It means that no one will EVER get in trouble helping our community
- It means that the customer is always our first → “I am Third”
- It also means that we cannot do all things for all people
- “Do we provide a 4 star service when a 3 star service will do?” – Former dean at Ross School of Business

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Closing Thoughts

	2010	2011	2012	2013
BBA Kresge	6.3	6.1	6.2	6.2*
BBA Other Services	5.68	5.68	5.66	5.77
MBA Kresge	6.2	6.4	6.3	6.4
MBA Other Services	5.12	5.44	5.48	5.55

*BBA 2013 scores 6.38 without MAP Support Question
– No MAP program for BBAs yet

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Closing Thoughts

• Exit Survey Responses from MBA Grads

- “Another gem at Ross. Whenever I have asked Kresge for help (in person or remotely through Meebo), I have never been disappointed. They helped me greatly during my internship.
- “Best thing about Ross hands down.”
- “The librarians are amazingly responsive and supportive. I will miss them and their resources.”
- “Kresge Library staff is awesome! They answer to the e-mails promptly even during the weekend and they are very helpful. The chat is also very useful.”
- “Kresge library staff rocks! One of the best things about Ross.”

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Closing Thoughts

- Hospitality and the Power of Yes at Kresge



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Closing Thoughts

• Be careful about Metrics & Dashboard indicators

- Numbers are used (especially in politics) as props!
- Numbers can mean so many different things
 - ~ Batting average of .406 is amazing!
 - ~ Winning percentage of .406 is not good – but maybe it is justified
 - ~ Fielding percentage of .406 is really awful!

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Closing Thoughts

- **Be careful about Metrics & Dashboard indicators**
- Groupon #s
 - ~ Discounts on "list price"
 - ~ Not available on sale merchandise
 - ~ Discount on first part of purchase
 - ~ **A 50% discount promised can result into a real discount of 26%**
- See also pricing at Kohl's....
- See more ranting here:
http://mblog.lib.umich.edu/~cseeman/archives/2012/04/groupon_math_or.html

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Closing Thoughts

- Sometimes it does not matter what your dashboard shows



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Thank You

Thank You
 Questions?

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