

Where is the Hospitality in Your Library?

Charleston Conference 2011

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General Thoughts on Hospitality

- 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

What is Hospitality at Disney?

- 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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What is Hospitality at Nordstrom?

- Nordstrom
- 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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What is Hospitality Over HOF Weekend?

- 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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What is Hospitality at Your House?

- We often associate hospitality with travel, dining and high cost activities
- But what about guests at your house?
- You still offer them drinks
- You consider what they need when they are over
- Mi casa et su casa

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Does Hospitality Work in the Library?

- Librarians are amazing at providing service.
- In many academic settings, the libraries are the element that people are most fond of in reviews and surveys.

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Self-Service Mentality

- With the advent of electronic resources and discovery layers – we have worked very hard to make the library mostly self-service.
- That is great when people know what they want.
- This is not so great when people don't know what they need.
- This is when we have a problem.

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Removing the Middle Man

- Along with the Self-Service mentality, we have sought to remove the middle-man.
- This includes removing the reference desk and encouraging email contact with the library.
- While most want to work independently, they also want to easily get help when they need it.

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Enabling Independent Users

- Discovery layers work great when people know what they want.
- Discovery layers might not work so well when people are not sure what they are looking for.
- We need to be understanding of users in their point of need.
- Is this a teachable moment?

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About Kresge Library

- Kresge Library: Independent Library at University of Michigan - Ross School of Business (3700 FTE)
- Staff of 20 FT people (8 librarians, 12 staff) with 4.5 FTE of temporary staff
- Open 108 service hours a week
- <http://tinyurl.com/KresgeLibrary>

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What does Hospitality Look like at Kresge?

- 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
- Hospitality and Empathy are KEY TERMS!
- I am more concerned about what our students and faculty need than what libraries are doing elsewhere

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What does Hospitality Look like at Kresge?

- 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

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Embedded Librarians for MAP

- 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.

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Strat 502

- Core class for MBA students in their first term.
- Assignment to look at one industry and two companies.
- While we provide research tools – we are quick to encourage people to come in for specialized assistance.
- “Walk you down the aisle” vs. pointing.

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Needs 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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Supporting Recruiting

- Recruiters have interviews 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
- Some things were tried and discontinued (coat check for students during interviews)

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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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What does Hospitality Mean at Kresge?

- It means being hospitable....plain and simple.
- “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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Thank You & More Thoughts

Next steps:
Expand to a full conference presentation and
articles
Keep discussion moving forward

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