Where is the Hospitality in Your Library?

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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

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

• 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.

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.
  ~ 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

• 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
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!

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”

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

Hospitality & Self-Service

• Hospitality can be modest and still be appreciated and useful

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

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
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...

Comcast is pushing “self service” as their new and improved service model

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

Hospitality & Self-Service

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

- The Self-Service Hotel…

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

Hospitality & Self-Service

- So maybe what we need is…
Two Spaces of a Library

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

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)

Two Spaces of a Library

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

Two Spaces of a Library

- The Physical space of the library is used for managing printed collections…
- Which ARE STILL RELEVANT and USEFUL!
- ILL request from a Law Library in Virginia.

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
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)

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**)

Hospitality at Kresge Library

- 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!**

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://tinyurl.com/KresgeLibrary)

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

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
Hospitality at Kresge Library

Maybe it looks like this

*Sign outside Regents Park Apartments in Chicago*

We want a concierge & repair service 24/7

Hospitality at Kresge Library

It never looks like this…

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

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

Hospitality at Kresge Library

- Some are possible because of our size and budget
  - Embedded Librarians for MAP
  - Fax machine at Kresge Library

Hospitality at Kresge Library

- 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

Hospitality at Kresge Library

- 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
Hospitality at Kresge Library

- We traditionally had a fax machine (or two) at Kresge Library for students to use
- When it no longer worked, it was not be replaced – but the need persisted
- Health forms, job acceptances, travel information often still required faxes

Hospitality at Kresge Library

- We ended up doing the faxes – but we “blinked” and bought a new machine — that base been very popular
- Changes the impression that the students have of the library

Hospitality at Kresge Library

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

Hospitality at Kresge Library

- Need Supplies?
  - Similar to many hotels that provide toothbrushes, etc. to travels 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

Hospitality at Kresge Library

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

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
Hospitality at Kresge Library

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

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

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!

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

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)
Where is the Hospitality in Your Library?
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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)

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.

Where is the Hospitality in Your Library?
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Hospitality at Kresge Library

- Late Night Copying for Faculty
  ~ We had faculty who wanted a service that would be available into the evening for last minute copies – typically for class
  ~ Since we were open the latest of any unit, we took this on
  ~ Established guidelines that we could support, but we misread the market
  ~ Almost no request came in – it is still “on the books”

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!
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

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?

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

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

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?

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?
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?

• 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

• 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

• 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!
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!

Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes

- What book do we want to model?
  - Graphics by Kelly Burr, University of Michigan

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

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)

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

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
Closing Thoughts

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

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 emails 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.”

Closing Thoughts

• Hospitality and the Power of Yes at Kresge

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!

Closing Thoughts

• Sometimes it does not matter what your dashboard shows …
Thank You

Thank You
Questions?

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