

## Where is the Hospitality in Your Library?

Salem-South Lyon District Library  
Friday March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
URL: <http://tinyurl.com/cgs2020ssldl>

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## 2 Presentation Overview

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

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## 3 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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## 4 Introduction

- Some presentation goals -
  - This is my approach and my philosophy about libraries and library services.
  - Libraries are not all the same – they have different funding, staffing, student/faculty/community needs.
  - What works at one, may not work at another.
  - How can we frame problems and opportunities to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our patrons.
  - Great libraries are not designed by architects – but by librarians & library staff.

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## 5 Introduction

- The view of an iconoclast.
- Borrowed 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](http://math.boisestate.edu/gas/pirates/pirates_lib.pdf)



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## 6 Hospitality & 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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7 Hospitality & 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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8 Hospitality & 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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9 Hospitality & Service

- Cruise Ship Model
  - Managing a huge number of people at every given time.
  - Things within and beyond your control (weather, health concerns, civil unrest, natural disasters).
  - Hospitality and flexibility are intertwined.



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10 Hospitality & 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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11 Hospitality & Service

- Hospitality can be modest and still be appreciated and useful



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12 Hospitality & 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 your users **like the way you would want to be treated**
  - It is **treating people well**, even before you know **who** they are
  - It is **not** simply luxury or excess

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13 Hospitality & 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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14 Hospitality & 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...



ATL Airport – July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012

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15 Hospitality & Service

- Or Maybe a Self-Service Hotel...



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16 Hospitality & Self-Service

- Self-service has a great role in librarianship
- That is great when patrons **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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17 Two Spaces of a Library

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

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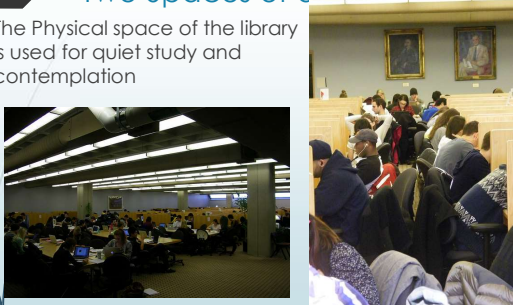
18 Two Spaces of a Library

- 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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19 Two Spaces of a Library


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



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20 Two Spaces of a Library

- The Physical space of the library is used for managing printed collections...
- **Which ARE STILL RELEVANT and USEFUL (though we may not be able to keep all we want)**
- But its not the biggest priority with building projects.
- In many ways – we focus heavily on the physical space.
- Study space can be managed by anyone on a campus!



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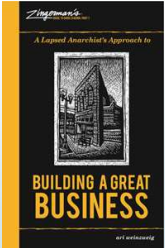
21 Two Spaces of a Library

- 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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22 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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23 Hospitality at Kresge Library

- Kresge Library: Independent Library at University of Michigan - Ross School of Business (3700 FTE)
- Formerly 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\*\*\*

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24 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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25 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
- Without empathy, we cannot truly connect with our users.



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26 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 (former CEO of JC Penney)!**

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27 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**

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28 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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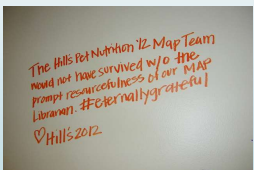
29 Hospitality at Kresge Library

- 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

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30 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



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31 Hospitality at Kresge Library

- Some have a modest or no cost associated with them.
- 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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32 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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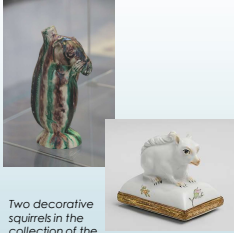
33 Hospitality at Kresge Library

- 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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34 Hospitality at Kresge Library

- Helping visitors and patrons.
- Squirrels at the Met (NYC)
- Bottle from Salem, NC - ca. 1790-1805.
- Snuffbox from Germany (Schrezheim manufactory), ca. 1761-1770. In Gallery 538 – closed the day I went.




Two decorative squirrels in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

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35 Hospitality at Kresge Library

- Some things were tried and discontinued
- Maybe they were not popular...or too popular to support
- "Do not get married to the results"** – Bernard Seeman (many times)
- Do not start with artificial metrics for success.
- We really have to trust ourselves to know if it is working or not.



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36 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!**
  - 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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37 **Becoming Kresge Library Services**

- So why did we change our name in 2014 to "Kresge Library Services?"
- Major construction project at Ross saw our space reduced from 27K square feet to 5K.
- Collection space reduced from 70K vol to 200.



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38 **Becoming Kresge Library Services**

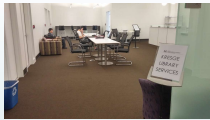
- Shifting from library as place to library as service.
- Creating an "ethereal library"
- Entrepreneurial Thinking involves:
  - New approach to a new (or old) problem
  - New market opportunity
  - Creative thinking
  - Empathetic focus (Design Thinking)
  - Willingness to fail
- Entrepreneurial Libraries do not have an exit strategy!




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39 **Becoming Kresge Library Services**

- "A completely re-thought Kresge Library Services, transitions from a collection of physical reference materials to a full suite of information resources and research services, guided by expert staff." – Ross Dividend, Fall 2016 (Ross Alumni Magazine)
- The library did not close, but become virtually unrecognizable.
- You do not always choose your path, but how you respond.



*The NEW Kresge Library Services at the University of Michigan*

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40 **Becoming Kresge Library Services**

- At Kresge, the "Ethereal Library's" value proposition is:
  - Live within the restrictions of virtually no collection space.
  - Figure out new collaboration mechanisms to serve our community.
  - Forget the dead, take care of the living!**
- If you are service-oriented, then you can survive these dramatic changes!**




*Squirrel at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor*

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41 **Becoming Kresge Library Services**

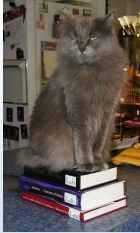
- Focus on what we can do vs. what we have done.**
  - Made decisions like not bringing back course reserves – do not have the space to manage it.
  - Still have evening reference via chat and email – all done remotely.



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42 **Becoming Kresge Library Services**

- Embrace the change**
- NOT a library problem of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- Changes in the last 50 years:
  - Copy cataloging
  - Local online catalogs & shared systems
  - Expanded access (TOC, more subject headings)
  - Shared catalogs (MelCat, etc.)
  - Discovery layers
  - Working papers management → digital repositories
  - Coffee and food in the library
- How many staff are checking in serials?
- Change is the only constant!



*Wanda Hates eBooks*

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### Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes


- Patron-Driven Services is a somewhat new way of thinking.
- 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-Drive Acquisition is a very common theme among collection development librarians. 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 (PDS) is the same model:
  - 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
  - Seeking out the 'high-class' problem (vs. the 'low-class' one).




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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?

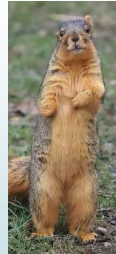


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### Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes

- High-Class Problem questions:
  - How do we build capacity to meet our patron needs?
  - How do we get all the people in 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

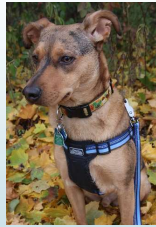
- Problem with "YES" can be that we lose ownership of the transaction
- HOWEVER, what we lose in ownership, we gain in creating an advocate
- With YES, we can create "Boosters and Ambassadors" for the library and the organization
  - Has love (not like) for the service
  - Has been able to get some unique service or interaction with 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

- 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
- The Race to the Bottom!




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### Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes

- What book do we want to model?



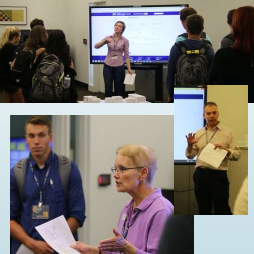
Graphics by Kelly Burr, University of Michigan

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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
- And when the library morphed into a service unit – it kept us functioning!**



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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 or libraries are doing
  - ~ It also means that we cannot take on everything – right now, that is finding students places to study.

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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!
- Our world right now is fixated on Coronavirus (COVID-19). We do not know what is happening – but we have to be ready no matter what.



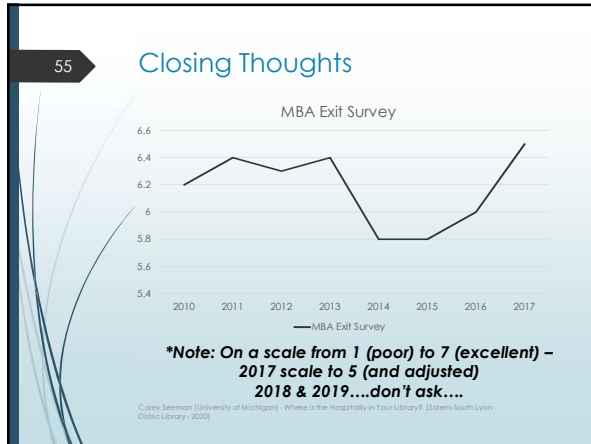
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### Closing Thoughts

- 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 – but that cannot be a deterrent from doing anything!
- "Do we provide a 4 star service when a 3 star service will do?" – Former dean at Ross School of Business

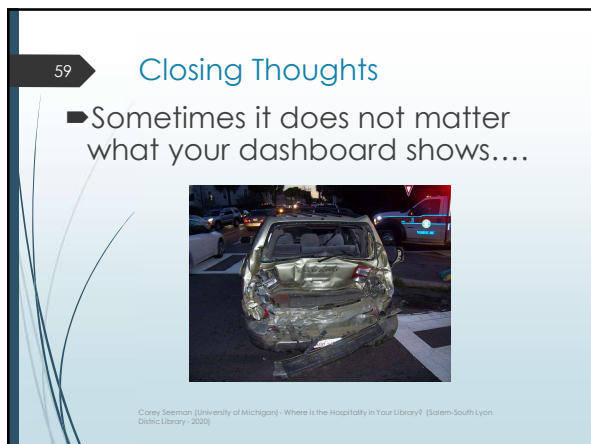
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- 56 Closing Thoughts
- Exit Survey Responses from MBA Grads
    - "Another gem at Ross. Whenever I have asked Kresge for help (in person or remotely through Meebo), I have never been disappointed. They helped me greatly during my internship.
    - "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."
  - We did poorly in the survey during construction – where did the library go???**
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- 57 Closing Thoughts
- Balancing Hospitality of our community and organizational change can be difficult.
  - It is difficult to be hospitable if you do not feel that you are treated well or fairly.
  - It is the manager's role to ensure that staff have an opportunity to share thoughts and opinions about what is going on.
  - But it's the manager's role to ensure that the unit remains relevant and functioning.
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- 58 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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60 Thank You

Questions?

Slides:  
<http://tinyurl.com/cgs2020ssld>

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<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~cseeman/index.html>

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