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!

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.”
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.

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
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.

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.
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.

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?
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

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
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

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.
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.

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.
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)

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).
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.

Thank You & More Thoughts

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

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