Where is the Hospitality in Your Library?

Farmington Community Library Staff Day
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Presentation Overview

• Introduction
• Hospitality Overview
• Hospitality at Kresge Library
• Patron-Driven Services and the Power of Yes
• Questions and Discussion

Introduction

• And a brief lesson from Crime Club
• Doubleday marked certain titles “Crime Club”
• Crime Club was a radio program that ran from December 2, 1946 to October 15, 1947
• The host was the “Librarian” and he introduced each story.
• For more info, see:

The Big Question: Future of Academic Libraries

• Redefining the Academic Library: Managing the Migration to Digital Information Services (2011, Education Advisory Board)
• “Writing Our Own Obituary” - by 2015:
  ~ Patrons go elsewhere for information
  ~ No need for traditional librarians
  ~ Library will need to be a space for more than just books

The Big Question: Future of Academic Libraries

• “Size Doesn’t Matter” – Collections
• The “Lonely Reference Librarian”
• Changing from “just-in-case” to “just-in-time” purchasing/collection development.
• “Repurposing the Warehouse”
• “Coming Out from Behind the Desk”
• Library – Service = Storage

The Big Question: Future of Academic Libraries

• Does this at all matter to a public library?
• All libraries are way more similar than we pretend
• We all have our high-demand patrons…and those that we wish used our services.
• There are lessons that are transferable to all library types.
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 in General?

- It is being available and visible
- It allows you to change what they expect from the library
- It is treating your users like customers (no matter what we call them)
- It is not simply luxury or excess
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.
- In communities, libraries are often considered one of the most commonly cited benefit of a city or town.

Self-Service Mentality

- 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…

Self-Service Mentality

- The Self-Service Hotel…
- 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.

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.

Self-Service Mentality

- So maybe what we need is…
About Kresge Library

- Kresge Library: Independent Library at University of Michigan - Ross School of Business (3700 FTE)
- Staff of 21 FT people (8 librarians, 13 staff) with 4.5 FTE of temporary staff
- Open 108 service hours a week during the Fall and Winter terms.
- 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

What does Hospitality Look like at Kresge?

- Maybe it looks like this
  Sign outside Regents Park Apartments in Chicago
  We want a concierge & repair service 24/7

What does Hospitality Look like at Kresge?

- 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

- Some are possible because of our size and budget
  ~ Embedded Librarians for MAP
  ~ Fax machine at Kresge Library
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.
- We get a lot of “return business” after MAP is over.

The %^&*%^& Fax Machine

- 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.

The %^&*%^& Fax Machine

- 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

What does Hospitality Look like at Kresge?

- Some have relatively modest cost with a good return
  ~ Strat 502 Support
  ~ Supplies for Students
  ~ Doughnuts!

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 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.
Needs Supplies?

- We got creative in obtaining the supplies.
- Green Clean Day & eBay

Doughnuts

- Kresge Library runs on carbs. Two dozen doughnuts costs $12 – we get them weekly during MAP.

What does Hospitality Look like at Kresge?

- Some have virtually no cost and a good return
  - Supporting Recruiting
  - Flexibility With Staff
  - Clickers for Student Awards Ceremony
  - Distribution of Club Material
  - Our General Disposition!

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

Flexibility With Staff

- 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.
- Nothing can happen without that.
- Ties to Positive Organizational Scholarship
- Important for Modeling Good Behavior!

Clickers for Student Awards Ceremony

- MBA students have a celebration at the end of their time at Ross
- They have all sorts of awards that are voted by the graduates
- By using clickers – they can easily and more enjoyably do this live
- Did take a bit of setup and work – but the return is great and it did not cost us anything
Distribution of Club Material

- Kresge Library has longer service hours than almost any other entity on campus
- A club officer asked for help in distributing material to PT MBA students who are often only on campus at night and weekends
- We are going to allow them to give us these items and distribute them with requests (holds) at circulation
- No costs associated with this – but it is a service they can appreciate

Our General Disposition!

- The most important element of hospitality is our disposition.
- 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)

What did not work?

- 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.

What did not work? Late Night Copying

- 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. Still “on the books”

What did not work? Coat 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.

Connecting Hospitality with Service

- Hospitality & Service
  ~ Cannot have one without the other
  ~ Make a person feel welcome at your library
  ~ Treat them as you would like to be treated
  ~ Create the library you would want to use!
  ~ “Point with your feet, not with your arm”
Connecting Hospitality with Service

- These concepts need to be embraced up and down the organization.
- Has to be embraced regardless of other factors (even ones beyond your control).
- It has to be multi-directional. So hospitality needs to be practiced towards each other as well as the patrons.

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?

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

- **Whiteboard at Ross – March 22, 2012**

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

- **Power of Yes**
  - Purchasing everything patrons want – this might not go over well with some staff.
  - Discussion with a librarian once about the way it “used to be” with collection decisions by library staff.
  - They felt authoritative when they said NO to requests.
  - I suggested that we can be just as powerful with an answer of YES.

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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**

- **A Booster or Ambassador**
  - 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**

- **Managing Expectations**
  - No organization has become great or maintained greatness by managing expectations.
  - No organization has ever developed passionate users by managing expectations.
  - This is the time when poor customer service is winning! Let’s flip that around.
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.
- However, the total effect was that they destroyed the overall quality of the coffee.
- Now, Charlie McCarthy would not touch it.

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 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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Exit Survey Responses from MBA Grads

- “Another gem at Ross. Whenever I have asked Kresge for help (in person or remotely through Mebo), 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.”
What does Hospitality Mean at Kresge?

- Hospitality and the Power of Yes at Kresge

Two Final Thoughts

- Be careful about Metrics and dashboard indicators

Two Final Thoughts

- Does creating a hospitable library that focuses on customers, provides services that are being requested and promotes the power of yes **hurt**?
  - Lawrence of Arabia - [http://youtu.be/BYNELueJ1w?t=34s](http://youtu.be/BYNELueJ1w?t=34s)

Thank You

Thank You Questions?

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