Public Services

Customer Service

- Services
- Patrons
- Public Relations
Customer Relations
Customer Relations

You are First Contact!

The Front/Circulation Desk is the Center of activity (even when there are other service desks...Reference, Media, etc)
Public opinion important

- Has value and speaks to the usefulness of library in public’s eyes
- Positive relations can result from successful personal contacts between individual users and library staff
Many times circulation practices determine if users continue to use the library

Or whether they become discouraged at failures to obtain desired materials promptly.

...Or discouraged with staff attitudes!
Whole library systems may be judged by the work of a single circulation assistant!

Surveys bear this out –
- Paint all staff with same brush
- Even though they might only be speaking of a particular staff or about a particular incident.
Public Relations

- Staff must be:
  - Properly trained
  - Taught philosophy behind the routines

- This way staff may be expected to treat each user:
  - As an individual whose request is important
  - Someone who is entitled to a full measure of service consistent with library policy
Customer Relations

- Almost everything done in the library is an act of Public Services

- It’s everything that affects the patron’s attitude towards the library, positive or negative.

- It’s about serving our users!
Customer Relations

- How long it takes to catalog materials
- How staff answers phone
- Accuracy of shelving
- Inflection in one’s voice when answering question
- Presence and quality of signage
- ‘Warmth’ or atmosphere of a library
Customer Relations

- Customers often judge library on basis of experience with public services
- Every public transaction adds or detracts from library’s image
- Bad customer relations is a sign that service philosophy is defective in vision, execution or both
Customer Relations

ACTIONS

- Smile & nod
- “Good Morning”
- Or better: “Hello. How may I help you today/What can I do for you?”
Customer Relations

- Public Service staff applies the rules and regulation with fairness and flexibility

- All customers must be treated as individuals!
Desk Operations
More than a desk...

It’s a starting point for all services!

- **Circulation**
  - Specialty circulation – equipment, reserves, models, games,

- **Information**

What other services do you provide at your Desk?
Opening the Library

- Turning on lights
- Powering:
  - Computers – staff & public use
  - Copy machines
- Opening doors
- Checking phone messages
- Checking overnight book drop
- Unlocking cash box
- Prepping the desk
- Other?
Closing the Library

- Turning off equipment
- Locking all doors
- Ensuring building is empty
- Other?
And then there’s Self-service!
Desk Operations

- Remember –
  - For each job in the library there is a level of expertise for handling it.

- Tiers of employees –
  - Professional Librarians & Non-Librarians
  - Paraprofessional
  - Clerical
  - Pages/Student workers

- Libraries are all different – what’s your job?
Technology Assistance
Talk to me!

- Academic’s story first...

- How does your library provide technology assistance?
Now on to Patrons!....