Guidelines for Exemplary Service

Our customers include both Libraries patrons and fellow Libraries employees. In all of our interactions, whether in-person or virtual, we aim for customer service that exceeds expectations and work relationships that exemplify respectful, collaborative partnerships.

General
- Model the behavior you want to see.
- Be courteous and kind.
- Be positive and attentive.
- Take initiative.
- Ensure that customers are happy.

Answering Questions
- **Be ready to help:** Make eye contact with the customers. Greet and offer assistance throughout the library.
- **Listen to the customer:** Allow customers to use their own words to pose their questions. Rephrase the questions and/or ask your own to clarify their needs.
- **Set your boundaries:** Redirect unkind or inappropriate conversations.
- **Answer general questions yourself, whenever possible:** Answer directional questions, item availability, account creation, and other non-research questions.
- **Answer specific questions when you are able:** Refer people to appropriate personnel.
- **Be prepared to work collaboratively:** Ensure that the customers receive seamless service by knowing your fellow faculty and staffs areas of expertise.

Referrals (see also Guidelines for Exemplary Referrals)
- **Referrals should be positive and conversational:** Refer to other faculty/staff, not desks (i.e., reference desk, circulation desk), as often as possible. Let the people know why you are referring them to other faculty/staff members.
- **Ask the right people:** Who are the experts in our library?
- **Walk with customers on referrals whenever possible.
- **Follow up:** Was the question answered?

Customers = Libraries patrons + Libraries employees
- Greet customers throughout the library.
- Make eye contact.
- Offer assistance.
  
  “Can I help you with anything?”
  “Are you finding what you need?”
  “How is your search going?”

- Listen to the customer
  - Make referrals positive, conversational, and collaborative
  - Ask the right person
  - Make referrals
  - Close the loop
  - Be ready to help

Customers = Libraries patrons + Libraries employees

Guidelines For Exemplary Referrals

THINK yes!

- Focus complete attention on the customer and his/her information need.
- Use open-ended questions.
  - “What additional information can you give me?”
  - “Please tell me more about your topic.”
  - “What have you already found?”
  - “What is the scope of your project?”

- Err on the side of referral. (If in doubt, refer.)
- If possible, refer to a person, not a department or service point.
  - “What do you think, Becky?”
  - “I’m not sure, but Joe is an expert on this. Let’s check with him.”
  - “Amy would be a good person to ask about this. She’s helping someone else right now. Let’s get you logged on to a computer and I’ll ask her to check in with you as soon as she’s free.”

- Who and what are your resources?
- Find the Libraries employee who can best assist or resolve the customer’s issue.
  - “You tried to register but weren’t able to because of a library hold? Let’s ask Sid how to resolve that quickly.”
  - “Ben is the project manager. We can ask him about that.”

- Stay with the customer as you consult another Libraries employee.
  - “This item is in Media Services. I’ll take you there.”
  - “Let’s head to the reference desk. Sally is there and can help you search this database.”

- Make sure the customer gets what he/she needs.
- Evaluate the total interaction with the customer.
  - “Have your questions been completely answered?”
  - “Do you need further information?”
  - “If you need additional information, please contact us again and we’ll try something else.”
  - “Does this fully resolve the issue?”

- Walk customer to location or other Libraries employee, if possible

Portions adapted from the RUSA Guidelines for Behavioral Performance of Reference and Information Service Providers (http://www.ala.org/rusa/resources/guidelines/guidelinesbehavioral).

Approved June 3, 2014 by Executive Committee