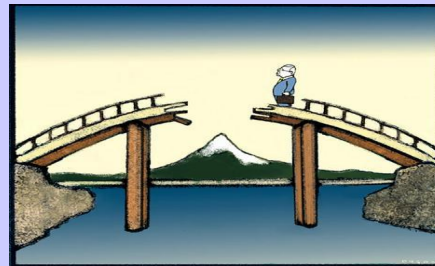


Connecting with Customers: Customer Service Training for Library Staff

Authors: Irene M. Lubker, Alan T. Williams, Barbara A. Wright, Catharine S. Canevari, Jean P. Shipman, Kristine M. Hughes
Tompkins-McCaw Library for the Health Sciences, Richmond, VA.

Objective:

- Provide customer service training to library staff via blogs, discussion board, and Blackboard course management software
- This initiative is aligned with our institution's strategic plan and based upon surveys of library users, including a local service survey and 2004 & 2006 LIBQUAL+ results



Advantages:

- Increased training for staff
- Increased awareness and interest in library services by users
- Increased awareness and interest in customer service by staff
- Increased service culture among staff
- Improved communication with users
- Opportunity for Service Desk staff to actively participate in training since they add content
- Tracking of user logins provides data on the frequency of which the resources are used

User Concerns:

- Provide library users with exemplary and consistent service
- Recruit, retain, and develop faculty and staff of the highest caliber
- Provide reliable handling of user service issues



VCU Libraries



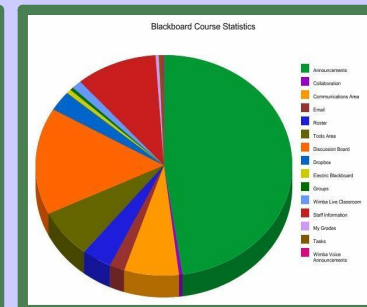
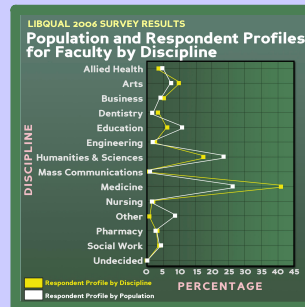
Challenges:

- Getting staff to access Blackboard and the blog regularly
- Lack of knowledge on how to access Blackboard and the blog
- Getting input from staff on training needs
- Training staff on how to use both tools

Methods:

To get staff trained:

- Staff training survey used to identify training gaps and needs
- Staff training survey results used to target the identified needs
- Training offered as workshops, blackboard class, tutorials and regular staff meetings with in-house training
- Two Blackboard classes also used to pull together different training resources and collection of usage data to provide feedback to both trainers and trainees
- Blogs for staff and user feedback



Results:

- Blackboard is a useful tool for staff training and can help document achievement of strategic planning goals
- Service Desk Blog is helpful for sharing information and updating staff
- Training on software packages such as Blackboard and blog software should be incorporated into staff training
- Blackboard training course successfully provides one location for staff training materials