Title
Mindful Librarians: Self-Assessment and Embracing the RUSA Guidelines

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Intro

The original RUSA Guidelines for Behavioral Performance of Reference Staff and Information Providers were first published in 1996 (revised in 2004) and were intended to be used in the training, development, and evaluation of library professionals. The UCI Libraries adapted our own version of these guidelines, Customer Service Guidelines for Access Service, which contain 5 areas of focus. In 2009 we grappled with the problem of how to move from a set of paper “rules” to an active internalization of practices. We educated our service providers about the guidelines and invited them to select some to focus on during the 2009-2010 academic year. Each service provider was required to submit several self-assessments of transactions during which they focused on a particular guideline. We observed that by focusing on a single guideline the service provider actually had to be mindful of all of them.

Goals

Librarians selected ONE guideline (or more) to focus on in their 2009-2010 annual plans. They used their own words to describe their interpretation of the RUSA Guideline/UCI Customer Service Guideline they would use during the reference interaction self-assessment exercise.

Assessment

During fiscal year, 2009/2010, all reference librarians (a total of 20 librarians who provide in-person and electronic reference service) were asked to personally identify at least one reference assessment goal. The team developed an anonymous self-assessment process by having librarians choose a specific skill to focus on for one year, then developing a schedule that requires each librarian to engage in quarterly self-reflection on his or her reference skills and practice articulating their thoughts and self-assessment.

Results

Self-Assessment Reference Transactions

- 14 from Spring Quarter 2010
- 26 from Fall Quarter 2009
- 25 from Winter Quarter 2010

Self-Assessment Survey Results

- Did the self-assessment process help you improve?
  - Yes: 100%
  - No: 0%

Demographics

- 10 Full Librarians
- 4 Assistant Librarians
- 6 Associate Librarians
- 3 Staff

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