

Creating the Customer-Driven Library

Ch. 5 & 6 Notes

Chapter 5

- Successful urban libraries analyze their demographics and shape their library hours and services to meet those needs.
- A library needs to mold itself to reflect the needs of its patrons, not its employees!
- Most library staff prefer M-F 9-5 hours.
 1. This ignores that most people are in school, work, or afterschool activities during these times and cannot access the library.
- **How to fine-tune the library schedule**
 1. Determine your average hourly attendance using the stats from an average month.
 2. Calculate the number of hours the library was open and divide that by users. This gives you the number of patrons you have per hour on average.
 3. Compare a whole day of careful calculations (hourly tabulations) to see how this compares to the “average number.”
 4. Look for patterns.
 5. Are there more people after school and not many during the mornings? Think about how your library hours can be rescheduled to meet the needs of users.
 6. Implement those changes if possible.
- Also survey patrons about why they visit the library at certain hours.
- The director is often too busy to interact with users.
 - Doesn't know the users wants and dislikes.
 - Often are in charge of finances, business meetings, HR, etc.
- Reaching the community
 - Have the librarians contact simple surveys of the community through questionnaires, focus groups, surveys, and researching the changing community.
 - Libraries need to serve many different groups at all levels of society.
 - Teen advisory boards can help you reach the pulse of teenagers.
 - Reach out to non-white, younger, older, non-middle class, male members of society too.

Chapter 6

- Make sure decision makers know how important the library is.
 - The more informed they are the more they'll support the library.
- Technology
 - Usually handled by young, inexperienced people who still have more knowledge than the librarians.

- Often use the library's system as their own test center.
 - **Don't let them do this!**
- Closely supervise them and make sure they're a part of the staff and honor the library's mission.
- Have every change to the library computer system be carefully documented and taught to another librarian.
 - This eases the transition to a new tech person when this person leaves.