February *2021 Course Highlights*

In case you missed it! Introducing Niche Academy Courses –

Niche Academy is an **open-source** online learning platform made specifically for libraries. The platform gives over 1200 libraries their own academy to create and share content with other libraries. As an added benefit and professional development opportunity to all staff, MLS has partnered with EduBrite and Niche Academy to bring this content directly to you!

No additional logins needed! Access Niche Academy courses via EduBrite by typing keyword "**Niche**".

Complete one of the highlighted Niche Academy courses:

<u>Niche: Goodreads – Perfect Book Recommendations</u>

Approximately 15(m). Goodreads is a social networking site where you can track what you've read or want to read, connect with friends, and share book recommendations with millions of readers worldwide.

Goodreads uses the data from millions of bookshelves to power its recommendations for you; just add books you've enjoyed to your virtual shelves. Goodreads will compare your shelf to those of readers like you, and will pinpoint new titles for you to read with similar genres, authors, and styles.

Goodreads is also a thriving community of readers, reviewers, librarians, publishers, and authors. You can use the Community

features to find book groups, contests, book signings and events, and connect with some of your favorite writers.

So, what are you waiting for? Create a Goodreads account and enroll in this Niche Academy course today!

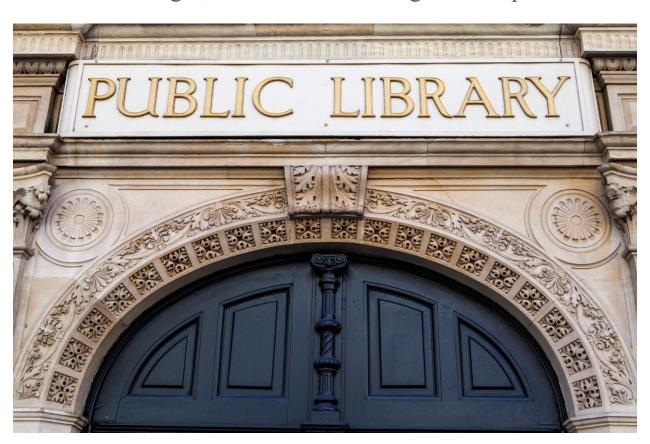## Niche: Dealing with Angry Patrons

Approximately 1(h). This course on dealing with Angry Patrons is designed to help you improve your skills in dealing efficiently with angry customers. It outlines a two-step method for responding to anger, by teaching the staff members to first deal with the patron's feelings, then deal with the person's problem. It includes practice with realistic patron encounters.

Niche: Working with the Public

Time to complete varies. In this tutorial you'll be introduced to current thought on working with the public. This tutorial was created by Cedar Rapids Public Library System and includes benefits, challenges, and tools for working with the public.

Working with Difficult People

1(h) 46(m) In every workplace, you're likely to perceive some colleagues are being more difficult to work with than others. Before you rush to judgment, you should determine if and how you might be contributing to the situation. (After all, it's entirely possible that you're the problem.) If you've determined that the problem isn't you, then this course can help. In this course, Chris Croft shares methods for recognizing the characteristics of some of the most common types of difficult people, and gives you strategies for dealing with these individuals more effectively. Chris provides practical techniques for dealing with a variety of different behaviors, including negativity, aggression, childishness, and selfishness. Plus, he explains how to overcome your own negative thinking, and get the best from a difficult boss.

Inclusive Mindset

55(m) Creating an inclusive environment is not a passive act. Rather, it is a skill that can be learned and improved upon with humility, bravery, and dedication. Inclusive communicators are better able to recruit, retain talent, navigate conflict, and develop buy-in in their work environment. In this course, learn about the importance of fostering an inclusive mindset in the workplace and how to implement beneficial changes in your organization. Examine the research about the critical roles that diversity and belonging play in business. Find out how to cultivate spaces that are safe by acknowledging common challenges that can come from privilege, mistakes, ignorance, or insensitivity. Discover how to promote allyship. Dereca Blackmon covers each of these areas to help you grow as an individual and to help you support others.

Economic Tips for Everyone

46(m) Learn about the economy around you and its implications for your job, business, and career. Economist Jason Schenker offers practical tips to help you stay ahead of the economy and capture upside opportunities during periods of growth as well as during an economic downturn. Jason explains the difference between academic economics and business economics, then shows you how to use widely available economic data to identify

important economic trends with strategic business implications. Jason shares best practices to help you analyze data while avoiding common data problems. Financial markets often move in relation to each other, and Jason helps you understand why. He then addresses important issues about global debt, monetary policy, and currencies, including the role of the dollar and the prospects for its replacement. Jason shows you the importance of housing in the economy, including housing opportunities and risks in an economic downturn.

Asking for Feedback as an Employee

21(m) Asking for feedback is integral to cultivating a growth mindset and being self-reliant—traits that managers want in all their employees, regardless of role or level. Jodi Glickman, bestselling author of Great on the Job, teaches you how to take ownership of your career by asking for specific and actionable feedback. Jodi provides a step-by-step process for asking for and getting meaningful feedback—from planting a seed in advance, to scheduling the conversation, to receiving and responding to

feedback in a way that strengthens your relationship with your boss. Plus, learn how to avoid common pitfalls, such as asking the wrong people, asking the wrong questions, and asking at the wrong time.

Diversity: The Best Resources for Achieving Business Goals

33(m) 11(s) "Diversity and inclusion" has become such a familiar phrase that it's easy to lose sight of what it means. Workplaces that incorporate a wide range of human experience—across gender, culture, age, sexual preference, and other differences—are more adaptable and more innovative places to work than their more homogeneous competitors. Not surprisingly, they do better on recruitment, retention, productivity—basically any measure of success you can think of. This course explains how to improve your organization's diversity and inclusion by thoughtfully examining the challenges and opportunities they present. Learn how to support a diverse workforce through wise management, carefully structured conversations, and a culture designed to celebrate the unique value of each team member.

Listen to Lead

49(m) Listening is a critical skill that empowers leaders to make strong connections and an impact. In this course, Dr. Eric Zackrison explains how to be a leader who makes people feel heard by understanding others more effectively, overcoming barriers to listening, controlling emotions, being present, and becoming an active listener. When you're listening, it's important to truly understand and engage with the other person. Listening helps you reach an agreement faster and become a trusted advisor. Eric teaches how to overcome common barriers to good listening, such as confusion, miscommunication, personal biases, and emotional reactivity. He highlights how to listen directly and avoid common pitfalls to listening well. Eric also discusses how to be present when you're listening to others and how to use nonverbal cues. In conclusion, he presents several useful tips on how to actively listen.

Leading Culture Change in Your Team

36(m) Erin Shrimpton—business psychologist, coach, and expert in organizational behavior—helps you change the workplace experience on your team for the better. Erin first defines organizational culture and shows how you can put all of organizational culture into perspective to work on improving experiences. People are more likely to get behind change when they're the ones driving it. Erin teaches you about participatory action and how to start your culture change plan. Then, Erin walks you through a five-step plan designed to help you make culture changes that stick. Learn how to define a shared vision, analyze data to diagnose the aspects of culture you're trying to change, set up culture squads to create solutions to the issues you've identified, and more. Plus, Erin shares some thoughts on why culture change initiatives at the team level are such meaningful work.