SERVICE PRINCIPLES

METROPOLITAN LIBRARY SYSTEM

This week our focus is on the Service Principle "Show Our Commitment"

We are all members of a team and we need to make sure that we are all working together towards the common goal of providing excellent customer service.

1. I Proudly Represent MLS	2. I Show Respect for Others	3. I Practice Teamwork	4. I Practice Safe Work Habits	5. I Show Respect for the Library and Community
I am an ambassador for the MLS by actively: -Displaying a positive attitude -Talking enthusiastically about my Library System and its services -Contributing to an inviting environment	I treat everyone with respect by: -Being sincere & Kind -Being considerate of individual differences -Acknowledging contributions -Practice acceptance of everyone	I am a team player working with my MLS teams to achieve: -An inviting, innovative link to the world -The goals of our Strategic Plan -Customer satisfaction -Personal accountability	I show I care about my own and others' safety by: -Working safely -Responding appropriately in an emergency -Reporting any unsafe condition	I show respect by: -Use resources wisely -Practice preventive maintenance -Report problems and/or defects immediately -am aware of resources for diverse cultural interests

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

Is safety first? We like to say it, put it on posters, and repeat it at company functions, but do we mean it?

The goal of every safety initiative is to prevent injuries. Safety is a value throughout MLS. Discuss with the group reasons why we are asked to develop and maintain safe working habits. How does safety relate to customer service?

Something to think about. . .

Teamwork begins with "R"

Teams form around a single common purpose. Teamwork occurs within a team only when there is respect. Great teams evolve around self respect and re-spect for each other.

In retrospect, all great teams reflect on the journey they have made as indi-viduals and how they have learned to appreciate the skills, knowledge and be-havior of their respective team-mates.

To create a great team when they are being built rather than in retrospect, in-dividual team members must first have self respect.

Self esteem is not enough. Self esteem requires a positive evaluation of us against some standard, often another person. Self respect requires no such comparison. It merely requires that we like ourselves for what we are, good and bad.

When we have self respect we do not care whether we are good or not at any chosen pastime like sport or singing or painting or gardening, just that we en-joy it. When we have self esteem we judge our pastime exploits against those of other people as being good.

When we have self respect we have little need to win as an individual in a team and are more likely to play our role to the best of our ability, with humil-ity and with good humor.

When we have self respect, we have a vastly improved capability to respect others. Not having to be better than someone else, but having due respect of our abilities, enables us to maintain and improve relationships even through conflict.

It allows us to welcome differences of opinion as a means of getting the best solution rather than avoiding them as a precursor to unpleasant conflict.

Team members who have self respect and respect others can operate with clarity by being honest without the expectation of an emotional response.

Self respect and respect for others is learnable. It is not learned or encouraged by putting a group of "values" on a wall plaque or on a sheet of paper. It is learned and encouraged by the team getting to know each other and them-selves well. Self respect is also encouraged by managers who mentor and coach.

A mentor generally tells others what to do in a given circumstance. They do so from an extensive background in the environment the team works in and an intimate knowledge of the person. A coach generally asks powerful questions to enable the individual to see a problem or their environment from a new angle, opening up new solutions. A mentor is generally also a good coach.

Coaching and mentoring individuals builds self respect in the coach and the person being coached. Giving a team access to and encouraging the use of experienced coaches and mentors that they trust, builds great teamwork.

Respect for others can be encouraged simply by giving the team opportunities to get to know one another as human beings.

The most important skill team members need to improve respect is how to listen and ask questions, especially clarifying and inquiring questions. Learning to question rather than assume builds rapport and respect quickly.

Teams build themselves around single, purposeful goals. Great outcomes arise from teams when that goal is extremely meaningful to the majority of team members. Great outcomes are achieved from great teamwork when there is respect.

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

Our team will be most successful when we treat each other with respect, communicate and work together toward a common goal.

What are some of the common goals we have within our department (library) or MLS that are important?

Identify one important goal that is a priority for the department (library). How will our team accomplish this goal?

Did you Know?

Respect for Difference:

Teams develop as people get to know one another and develop respect for their differences. The best way to develop the respect for differences is to experience a journey together. The obvious journey to use is the one required to reach a challenging goal.

Competence, Information and Authority

Groups of people with a common goal and respect for difference can become great teams. However, without the proper tools, they are still likely to fail due to unnecessary frustrations being put in their way of achieving the goal.

Any single person needs the right level of behavior skills and knowledge (competence), the right information and the right authority to execute their job well. So do teams.

If a group does not have required collective competence they will fail to form a team. They will not respect the difference of a group member who is assigned tasks but not competent to do them, even when no-one in the team is competent to do the task and, therefore, could not do any better.

For example, putting a group together and affixing the title of project manager to one of them without providing them the appropriate training to manage a project will restrict the development of a team and is just downright dumb. In many cases, training is not enough. It is experience that is required, even from an external source.

Having insufficient information to make decisions holds back all but the best teams, as too many people are not comfortable working in ambiguity. Information may be insufficient in many ways. One that is often overlooked however is that while, copious amounts of data is available, it is without context. In those situations while, data is available, information is sadly lacking. Group members will add their own context and thereby create unnecessary difference of opinion.

Groups of people without authority to act to reach the goal, even if it is a common goal, will struggle to form a team. Not having the necessary authority to act to reach a goal is no different in its impact on people than not having a common goal in the first place. Goals must be real and achievable by the team. They must have the necessary authority.

Team building exercises which concentrate on fun and frivolity are just that, frivolous. They do not build teams. They may raise morale for a moment but they do not build teams. Spend your time on building competence, creating a common goal and building respect for people's differences.

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

I am sure you have definitely heard or read the extended form of the word TEAM many times. *Together Everyone Achieves More*, itself conveys the importance of teamwork at the workplace and elsewhere. Take some time to discuss some of the benefits of teamwork in the workplace.

Staff Recognition
Our service Principles at Work

Strong Employee "Engagement" Equals High Level Professional Pride

Employee "engagement" may be called by different names in diverse industries, within creative theories, and at various times throughout history. Commitment, dedication, motivation, loyalty, involvement, investment, and enthusiasm are among the other descriptive terms used to define engagement. Engaged employees typically believe in the mission, values, and culture of their employers. More than just belief, these employees graphically demonstrate this support by their words, acts, and deeds at the workplace. They tend to also develop high-level professional pride in their job, their performance, and their rightful place in their corporate culture fabric.

Fortunately, professional pride is not a condition that can only be enjoyed by the employee who feels it. Management, co-workers, and customers will also notice, and be impressed with those employees who feel this sense of pride. This level of engagement is typically the engine that drives the professional and company pride starship. High-level commitment and investment in your job, by definition, will generate an equal level of professional satisfaction.

Professional and Company Pride Improves Job Performance

But, how exactly does one develop professional and company pride and, thereby, improve their performance? What are the typical results?

Professional and company pride are strong motivators to a continued commitment to excellence. Much as more passive and marginal athletes perform better on good teams, refusing to let their teammates down, engaged and happy employees tend to outperform themselves when working for a company of over-achievers. As they strive to "keep up" with the other prideful employees, they begin to take professional pride in their own performance.

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

Ask yourself a few questions.

Are you convinced that you give 100% effort during a typical workday?

How do you answer people when they ask, "What do you do and for whom do you work?"

Are you engaged, committed, dedicated, and invested in your job?

There are no right answers, only truthful ones. If you feel a strong sense of professional pride and enjoy your job, don't change anything. Your career progress should continue on a positive track. Be proud of what you do and for whom you do it—in addition to your personal sense of accomplishment.