Patron's Needs are the Focus of Each Person's Efforts

Uphold the principles of intellectual and academic freedom.

Faculty and students must be allowed open discourse and access to resources in order to achieve understanding, learning, and the advancement of knowledge. We will strive to build diverse collections, protect the privacy of library users in their pursuit of information, and ensure the confidentiality of their library activities and records.

Treat everyone with dignity and respect.

A good guide for this is to treat others in the ways we would like to be treated. By concentrating on the needs of users and coworkers and genuinely caring about their well-being, we demonstrate that we hold other human beings in high regard. Our collaborations should not harm anyone's self-esteem, but rather engender a positive personal interaction.

Be welcoming and professional.

Users have repeatedly told us that the quality and success of their library experiences depend on their interactions with librarians and staff. By being poised and ready to interact with users, establishing initial eye contact, and greeting people with an open facial expression and body language, you convey readiness and willingness to provide service. Each one of us represents the Marriott Library and the University of Utah in our work.

Be knowledgeable about your work.

Service is affected by how well people are trained to do their jobs and how much they know about the workings of their department and the library as a whole. Ongoing training should prepare the staff to do their work effectively. It should also include fundamentals about our library and the campus, such as where collections are located, how call numbers work, how to use the catalog, and what services we offer. Each person should understand the service implications of his or her work.

Listen to understand.

Careful listening is an essential component of effective communication and problem-solving. With co-workers and library users, try to understand the other person's perspective and what is really being said. By asking questions and restating what you've heard, you have a better chance of getting to the real meaning of a person's communication with you.

Accept all questions and requests as valid.

Libraries ensure free speech, individual enrichment, learning, and expansion of knowledge. Our users should feel comfortable asking any question. While we will not always be able to fulfill every question or need, we should not in any way judge the worthiness of a question or its subject matter. When necessary, we should explain limitations of staffing or resources that make it impossible to completely satisfy a user need.

Honor differences and diversity.

The library's users and employees have a variety of backgrounds including differences in culture, race, lifestyle, religion, experience, education level, and learning style. We need to provide an atmosphere that ensures opportunities and eliminates barriers for academic achievement, workplace participation, and service to users. We are all expected to set aside personal biases and prejudices to effectively work with users and each other.

Find the best available strategy or solution for meeting user needs.

The individuality and diversity of the library's users make it impossible to handle each patron encounter in the same way. The key to undertaking a successful resolution for each patron encounter is to skillfully negotiate what the patron needs and to translate that need into providing the appropriate library response. Take into consideration the individual asking the question. Don't rely on a standard response, but customize to meet the individual person and circumstances. Be willing to consult with colleagues if unsure on the correct way to meet the patron's request. While it is our aim to teach users to become self-sufficient in using the library, sometimes the best solution is to provide them with the information they need rather than instructing them on how to do it.

Support each other in providing service.

The efforts of an entire library staff are needed to satisfy an individual user's needs. Just as the quality of service of any member of a unit reflects on the unit as a whole, the work of each unit in the library reflects on the library as a whole. By helping a library co-worker meet a user's need, you are contributing to the overall mission, vision, and values of the library. This can happen through accurate and efficient technical processing and shelving on a routine basis; and it can happen in response to specific requests at public service desks. In each case, we support the campus community by supporting each other. By working together, we all succeed.

Eliminate unnecessary barriers to service.

Everyone should constructively challenge procedures, policies, and other barriers to information access, services, and use of facilities. The organizational need for such things as maintenance, processing, and statistics gathering should not unduly impede access to collections, information or information technology. To this end, we strive to enhance user access, improve operational procedures, minimize periods of limited or no access, and when limitations are necessary, explain the limiting condition with kindness and grace.

Resolve mistakes and problems without blame.

Libraries, because of their complexity, are prone to have numerous and varied problems that can impact service to users. These problems exist when there is a difference between the way things are and the way someone wants them to be. By gathering information about the problem and analyzing it while focusing on its resolution, positive steps can be taken to resolve mistakes and problems and avoid repetition in the future.

Take responsibility for follow through.

Needs of users can frequently "fall between the cracks" in a large organization. By asking our library users if they received the information or assistance they needed, you can ensure that their experiences in the library are successful. Following through on a user-related issue and getting it resolved can help everyone improve the quality of the service we provide. Do not blindly refer patrons to another library service point unless you are certain that they are able to provide the proper solution to the patron's need. Call ahead and confirm with that library unit if you are unsure about making a referral.

Create a teaching and learning environment.

The library is an essential part of a student's experience at the university. Students look to library staff to help them with their research and course work. Our job is to assist the students in their education by teaching research skills and helping them discover the resources that are available to them. Every interaction with a student is an opportunity to teach something new about the library and what we have to offer. We want students to become effective library users who recognize libraries as resources to support life long learning. In addition to the intellectual interactions with students, the layout of the physical library building plays a part in creating a teaching and learning environment. We strive to ensure that library labs, classrooms, carrels, group and individual study areas, quiet spaces, and places where discussion is encouraged meet diverse user needs