

Marissa Antosh

November 21, 2010

ILS 565

Professor Kusack

In-basket exercise

In-basket Exercise

I approached my in-basket in the following manner: which items are immediately going to affect me or my staff's jobs negatively? Which items are griping and which contain actual information? The three most important items I identified were the findings of the cost cutting committee, the broken computers, and the impending personnel cuts. The second level of important items were dirty windows and deadbeat patrons, and finally, the items I decided to wait on were lateness, the note about forced retirement, the toilet situation, pornography, t-shirt side business, and the complaints regarding temperature.

As to the findings of the cost cutting committee, I was alarmed at the assumption that "everything is available on the internet." My action was to reply to Merle's memo with a follow-up memo indicating that while I am disappointed by the findings, their report must be presented to the Board of Trustees (being a small public library). Then I'd send an email to Hector, the head of the BOT to set up a meeting regarding the committees findings and next steps.

In regards to Diane's broken computers, it is obviously hard for her to do her job without a working machine. Thus, I identified this as high priority since she's my support

staff. I would email her back and acknowledge her concerns, then set up one of the student assistants to take the computers to IT so she could stay away from that environment. The final action would be to assess the student assistant's experience at IT and contact the head of that department if the harassment continues.

Finally, the impending personnel cuts are on my high priority list because I'm probably going to have to get rid of some staff. This may include my reference staff due to the findings of the cost cutting committee. I would reply by email to Hector saying that I'd have a preliminary list of positions to cut but I'd hope that other ideas would be brought to the table before we fire people.

The lesser priority items are the dirty windows and the deadbeat patrons. I'd respond to the window inquiry with a memo to Elmer regarding his performance that the windows are dirty and the overflowing toilet is his job to address, not mine. I'd consider outsourcing our janitorial services in response to the personnel cuts. As to the deadbeat patrons, I'd reply by email to get more information (who are these patrons and am I familiar with them?). I'd suggest we leave the fines on their account and see if they'll pay half before revoking privileges.

Items that are lowest priority to me are the late staff member, forced retirement, toilets (which is addressed in tandem with the windows), porn, t-shirts, and temperature. The late staff member is certainly not to be swept under the rug, but I'd email the department heads to keep a running tally of who's late and how late they are. I think five minutes is not the end of the world, but we need to identify the pattern and then meet to tighten up the policy. The retirement on the BOT is unfortunate, but I feel this email was a heads-up and doesn't require a response. In regard to the pornography, I'd email Merle

back and indicate that installing filters isn't really in the budget. I'd suggest the reference staff do more walk-throughs and be available to respond to patrons who complain about the porn, but filters may block innocent content as well. This is a back burner problem.

It's interesting about the number of emails from Merle regarding cutting the reference desk, warning me about deadbeat patrons, and telling me to install filters, but then Al sends a heads-up that she's on the internet selling t-shirts. I'd acknowledge Al and send a thanks for letting me know, but take no immediate action. I'd keep a sharper eye on Merle though—she who crows the most about others may have something to hide.

Lastly, the bickering about what temperature the Tech Services room is lowest on my list. Mia and Sylvia are adults and should be able to compromise. Mia should respect Sylvia and Sylvia shouldn't pull seniority on Mia. I'd acknowledge their concerns via a quick note, suggest they meet together, and then revisit it at a later date.