

# Customer Service

Essentials for creating a culture of good customer service at your library

# Introductions

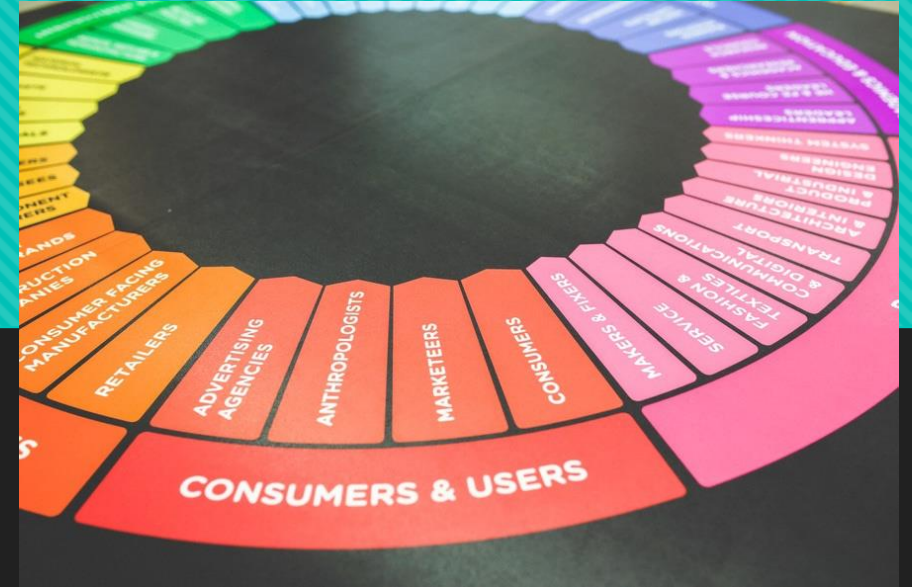
- Savannah Ball, Wichita Public Library
- Experience at customer service desk



**What is your customer service background?**

Respond in the chat

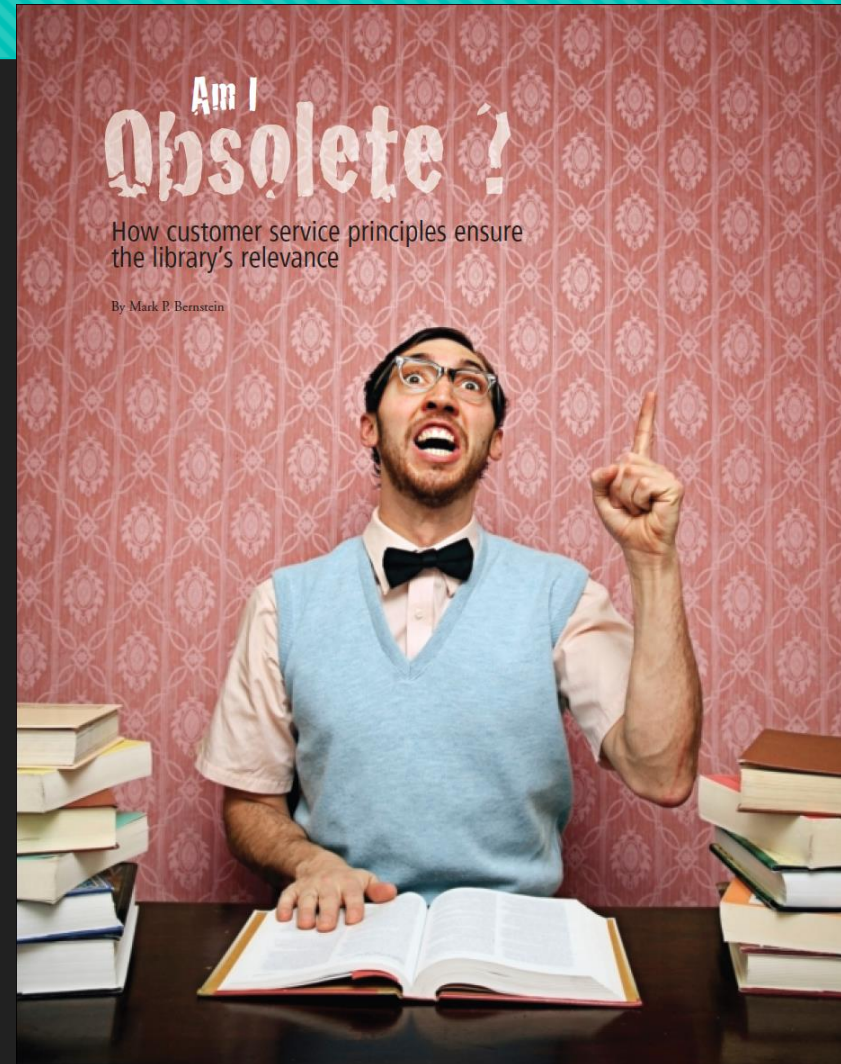
# Customers or Patrons?



- Ongoing debate
- Customers or Patrons? How You Look at Your Library's Users Affects Customer Service by **Karen Pundsack**
- Patron vs. Customer – A Way With Words podcast

# Why is customer service important?

- Keeps libraries relevant!
- [Am I Obsolete? By Mark P. Bernstein](#)
- Can you accomplish your mission statement without good customer service?



# Customer Service Mindset

- Good customer service is not a list of steps.
- It requires flexibility, caring, and a service-minded heart.



**What do  
you value  
most when it  
comes to  
customer  
service?**

Respond in chat

# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE



Advice



Support



Mind



Quality



Competence



HELP



Satisfaction



Service

Developing a Customer "Experience"



# Attentiveness

- Listen without assumptions.
- Notice body language.





## Care

- You have to want to serve
- Be sincere



**“We are all whole people, and even when we are at work we are whole, living human beings. And we are serving other whole, living human beings”**



# Trust

- Trust is necessary between library staff and your patrons
- Trust is necessary among library staff

# When someone breaks your trust...

- “I’m sorry, I see that we recently extended some due dates for you. In order to provide the newest and most popular titles to you and our other customers, I can’t extend the due date at this time.

# Taking Initiative and Responsibility

- Following through
- Taking the extra step
- Every staff member in the building is a librarian



**What kinds of things do you do  
to relax?**

Respond in chat



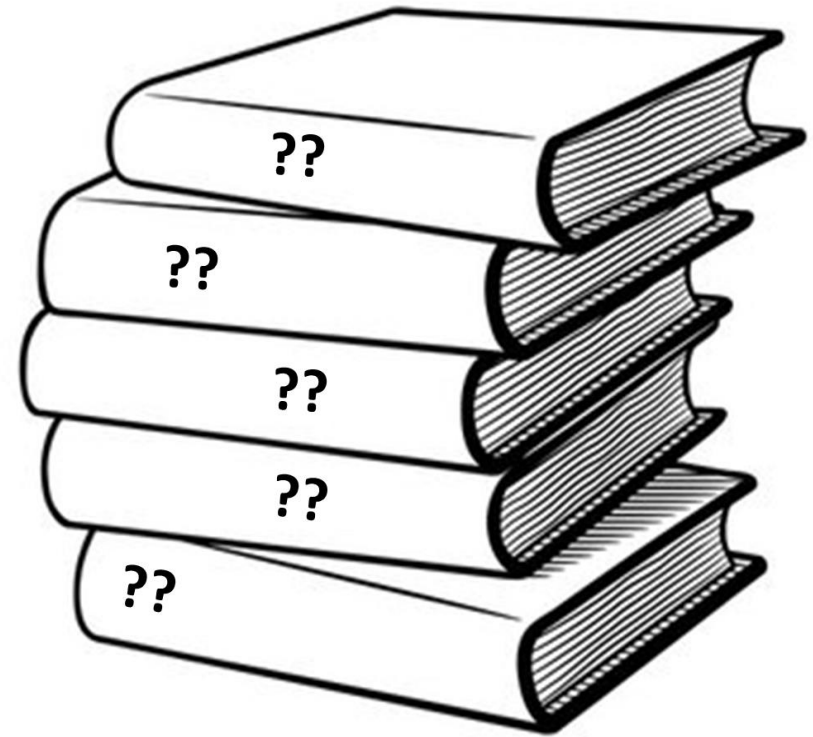
# Self-care

- Customer service requirement
- Take time to relax and disengage from your work



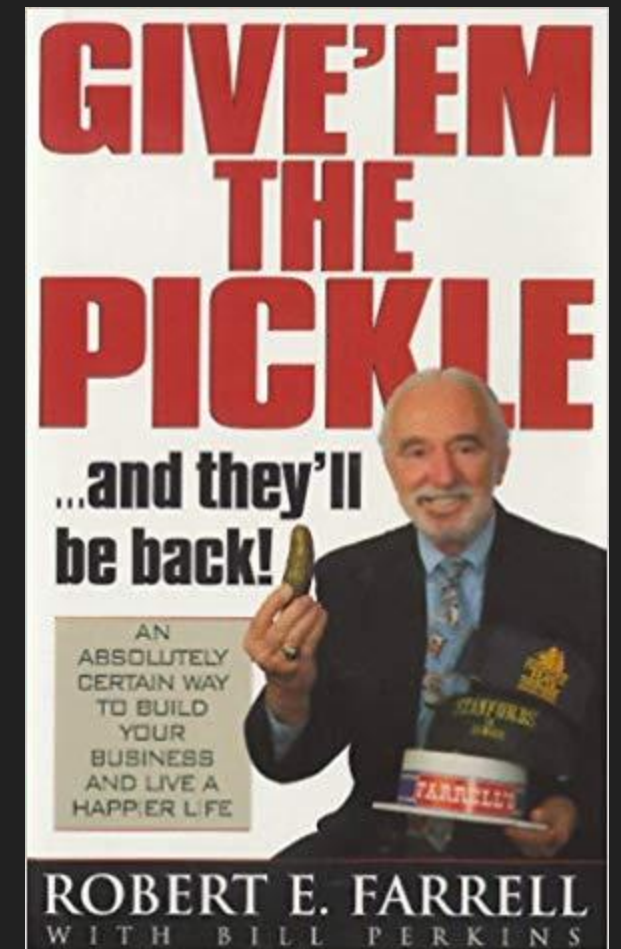
# Creating The Experience

What can you do to ensure your patrons are receiving good customer service?



# Small acts of kindness

- What can I do that doesn't cost money?
- Replaying incidents where the customer was unhappy
- [Finding Your Happy Voice by Gretchen Kaser on Public Libraries Online](#)

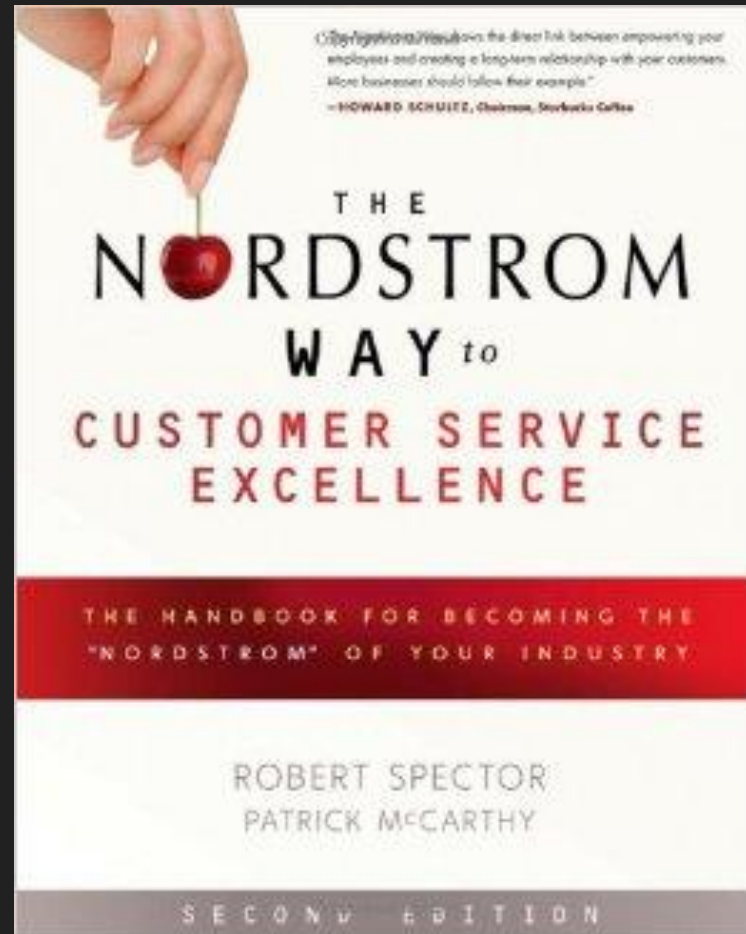


# Setting the tone

- Setting the tone through example
- Holding yourself and your staff to high customer service standards
- Hiring the smile, train the skill



“People always ask me, how do you teach core values? The answer is you don't. The goal is not to get people to share your core values. It's to get people who already share your core values.”

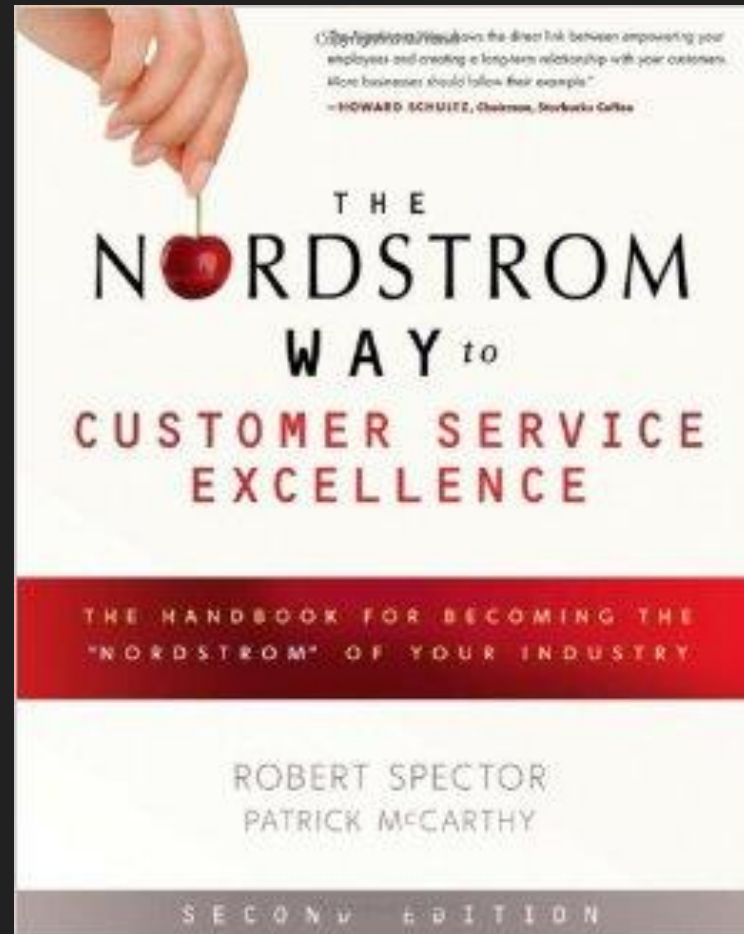


# Regular Recognition

- Praise
- Reward
- Discuss



“Product knowledge is power.  
Salespeople should know  
everything about the item  
...because it gives them  
credibility with the customers”



# Know your “product”

- Attend training
- Read about library trends
- Know what's happening in your library
- Encourage your staff to gain knowledge





# Customer Service in the Library World



# Signage audit

Positive Signs by Aaron Schmidt in Library Journal

## PARENTS

Please use only ONE toy at a time for play  
in the library.

Always return items to the correct bag.

## Help the librarian!

If you clean up toys, come to  
the Children's Desk for a  
special prize!

# Reviewing policies

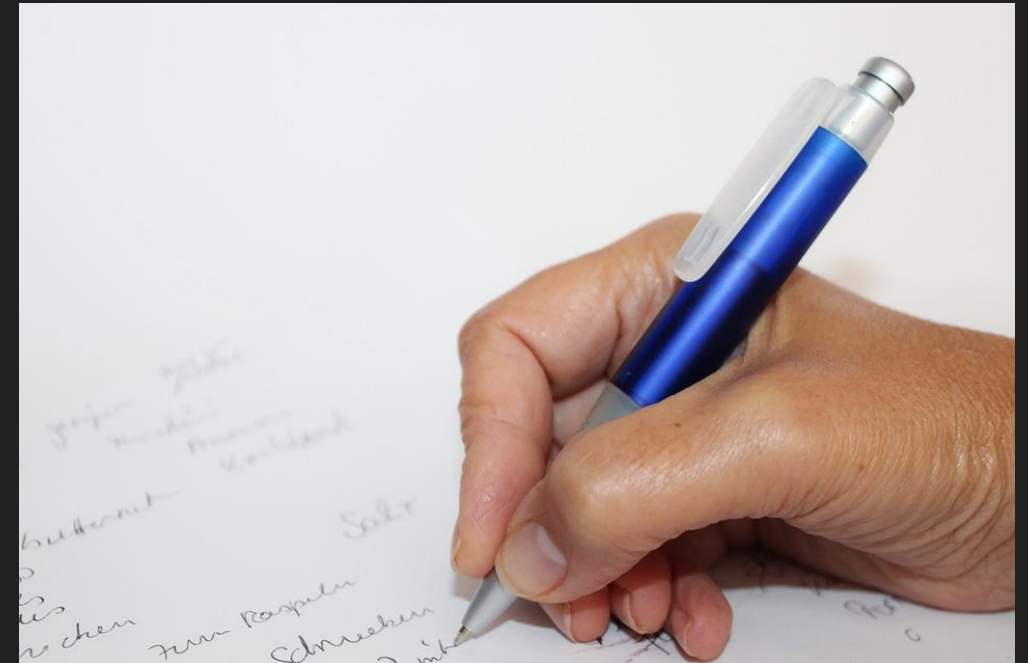
<https://libguides.ala.org/librarypolicy>  
ALA LibGuide on Policy Review



# Reviewing policies with a “No List”

Keep it at the front desk and every time you have to tell a customer no, make note of what you said no to.

Review it throughout the year.





# Service that respects patron privacy

“Confidentiality, privacy and intellectual freedom are crucial elements in providing quality public library service”

-American Library Association, Office of Intellectual Freedom



Privacy refers to your right to seek information without judgement or consequences.

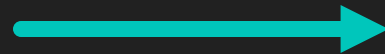
# Customer service to teens and children

- What Should Customer Service to Teens Look Like In the Library by Karin Jensen
- What's age appropriate?



# Embracing ambiguity

What should  
I do?



What could  
I do?



# Q & A Time!

## What customer service issues do you run into?

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