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# Competencies Index for Public Library Staff

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While a manager or supervisor may or may not provide direct public service, she or he, nonetheless, plays a key role in modeling, demanding, supporting, enabling and recognizing exemplary customer service. The consistent delivery of excellent service is fundamental to library success and needs to be an organizational priority. Interactions with users require trust and respect and focus on the needs of the individual. It is just as important to delivery quality customer service to online users as to those inside the library building.

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## Competency: Manages the library environment to enhance the user experience

Associated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:


- Organizes the library's collections and work areas to appeal to users and to meet their needs
- Organizes physical elements in the library to create a positive and welcoming environment
- Addresses the physical and/or mental barriers that could prevent people from using the library successfully
- Provides quality customer service to virtual users, ensuring that customer service principles are applied to online interactions.

## Competency: Contributes effectively to the development and evaluation of standards and practices for the delivery of quality service

Associated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Anticipates and maintains awareness of users' needs and wants through regular, informal interactions, observations, user surveys, complaint logs and other means
- Analyzes input from users, evaluates the effectiveness of current services, and

implements service improvements and adjustments to practices and procedures as necessary

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- Uses effective training strategies to teach staff good customer service skills and techniques
- Works with staff to create measurable service standards and best practices based on users' needs and expectations.

## Competency: Applies and models customer service skills to enhance the level of user satisfaction

Associated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Treats users in a welcoming, professional manner and provides other staff with a model of positive customer service
- Listens effectively to understand and address the particular needs of the individual library user
- Acts as a goodwill ambassador for the library, promoting the library's values and services in all interactions with library users and in the community
- Demonstrates thorough knowledge of all aspects of the organization that impact users (mission and vision, policies and procedures, collections and services, and system-wide strategies)
- Recognizes, honours and responds appropriately to all forms of diversity.

## Competency: Applies effective techniques to address difficult situations with users

Associated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Encourages library users to follow library policies; applies good judgment when deviating from official policies and procedures
- Maintains a calm, professional manner in difficult situations and applies effective communication techniques
- Acts quickly to meet customer's concerns in the moment, if possible
- Follows up and gets back to customer when necessary, engaging him or her in communication and resolution leading to satisfaction
- Takes online concerns and complaints seriously and addresses them as thoroughly as any other complaint.