

# **Creating a Year-Long Training Focus on a Shoestring Budget**

Presenters:

Michele Drovda, Regional Manager

Amanda Hirst, Supervising Librarian

Amber Wright, Operations Manager

John Allman, Assistant Operations Manager

# About Us

- East Region
  - 5 Libraries
  - 90+ Staff Members
  - Realigned under new management team in 2015



# **YES!**

## **Year of Excellent Service**

January 2017- December 2017

# Why:

Improve patron experience within East region

- Felt like time for a re-focus on Customer Service:
  - Patron comments
  - Observed staff behavior

# What:

- 11 months of activities that focused on Customer Service
- Sent via email. Staff were expected to respond
- Utilized existing library and other (mostly) free resources

# **YES! Management Planning**

- Why did we think we could do it ourselves?

# YES! - January



TEDx



- TED Talk: Hospitality on Broadway by Susan Reilly Salgado, Ph.D.
- Assignment:
  - Watch Ted Talk
  - Respond to Prompts including:
    - There is no question that excellent customer service is important during our interactions with patrons, but what about the work you do when you are not face-to-face with a patron? No matter your position in the library, name 3 ways your job contributes excellent customer service that does not involve direct interaction with the public.

# YES! February, March, and April

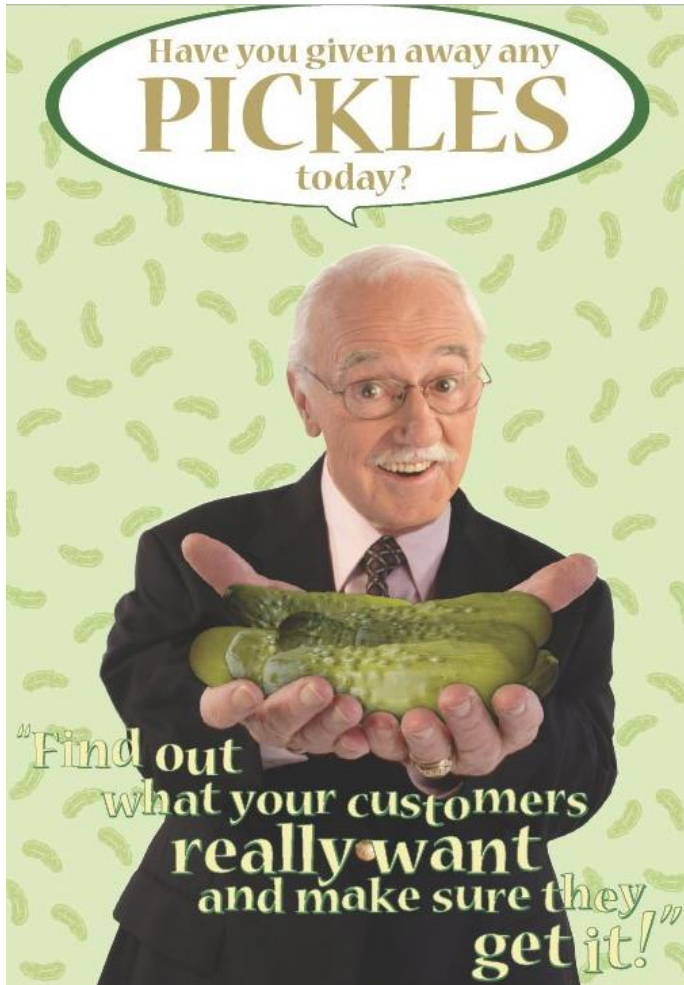
- Lynda.com Customer Service Fundamentals:
  - Introduction
  - Part 1 Outstanding Customer Service
  - Part 2 Building Rapport
  - Part 3 Exceeding Expectations
- Videos were assigned in segments of 20 minutes or less
- Worksheets accompanied each lesson

Lynda.com<sup>®</sup>  
FROM LINKEDIN





# YES! May & October



- Give 'em the Pickle Training Videos
  - \*Paid for through KCLS Staff Development Department in support of a larger staff day
- Theme resonated with staff

(At the same time, KCLS' new strategic focus was announced)

# YES! June

- Sought to combine new strategic focus with popularity of the pickle videos
- Staff responded via Google Form:



1. How do you connect excellent customer service (your "Pickle") to our new Mission, Vision, and Values? \*

Your answer

---

2. In order to remove any current barriers to accomplishing the Mission, Vision, and Values, what can we as staff do to improve customer service? \*

Your answer

---

3. For a future YES assignment, share a customer service situation (real or hypothetical) that you or a colleague have encountered where there seemed to be no clear cut answer. These will be used to discuss how we can offer the best customer service/give out "Pickles."

Your answer

# YES! July

- In June staff shared a customer service challenge. For July we asked staff to respond to two of the customer service challenges.

Scenario 1: We have an older female patron with mobility issues. Sometimes she uses one of our chairs as a walker, or asks for help opening the door for her. I experienced helping her at one point, because I was by the door, where she grabbed my elbow to help her stand. But I was told that we as staff are not supposed to help them that way, for our own safety, and security reasons.

Scenario 7: We have a patron who likes to have the weekend paper stapled a particular way. As he describes it, he likes the first sections, news, sports, etc. together and the "ladies" sections, style, travel, etc. together. That's fine for him to have a request, but if it isn't done the way he likes it, he complains. Do we "give him the pickle," and divide the newspaper?

Scenario 9: Patron wants to return a store-bought magazine for one that she has lost. She says she was told that was allowed. Whoever told her that, a staff person or someone she knows outside of the library, was incorrect, but now she is here and has already bought the magazine as a replacement.

# YES! August

- Lynda.com Customer Service Fundamentals:

## Part 4: Solve Problems:

Tell us about at least one of your big takeaway(s) from this section.

Your answer

---

How can you apply what you learned from this training to YOUR role at KCLS?

Your answer

---

Thinking back to Attitude Anchors, what can you do while at work to help you maintain a positive outlook? What can you do while at work to help repair a bad mood and start feeling positive again?

Your answer

---

# YES! September

- In July, staff were asked to respond to a customer service challenge.
- In September they chose what they thought was the best response:

A woman who speaks English as a second language had an interaction at the circ desk. She did not have her own library card and wanted to use her husband's card. Staff told her that she would need to have her husband's card in hand or apply for her own. The staff person was very calm and thought that what was being said made sense to the patron. The patron left the circ desk and went over to the ref desk to complain in a very agitated state that "she had been using the library for 6 years and no one had ever treated her like that before and we had always been helpful before!" \*

- A. This seems a matter of a patron being allowed to bend the rules of privacy and being accommodated. I agree with the circ desk decision. My actions would be the same; polite and explanatory, reiterating our policy regarding confidentiality of patron records and card usage. Most importantly, relaying that every King County resident with proper ID and address verification can obtain a card of their own and no longer have a restriction regarding library use.
- B. Tell her: Don't you ever come to me and complain about what someone else at another desk said. That person is a friend of mine and I know she would never treat you that way. If you ever try to use your husband's card again I will make sure you will never be able to use our library again. Now I need to help someone else so please leave
- C. Ask the patron if she would like us to call her husband, get the phone and pin number, take her to the self-checkout station and help her check out. I would also help her to save that card number with pin in her phone so that we do not have face this kind of situation again. I would also encourage/try to help her apply for her own card, and tell her the many benefits of our physical and online resources.
- D. First, I would have ascertained the level of English that the patron appeared to be proficient in. Did the patron have her husband's card? The scenario doesn't say whether the staff member actually asked her or if she actually understood. If I felt that she didn't understand the situation well, I would have attempted to find a staff member who spoke that language or offered the Language Line Service to ensure that there wasn't a communication barrier so that she understood how we valued the need to protect privacy.

Briefly, why did you select this response? \*

Your answer

---

# YES! November

- Evaluation

## November YES!

Thank you to all of the staff in our region! We have spent a lot of time this year focusing on how we can, do, and strive to always improve in creating a positive experience for our patrons.

The Management Team would like you to take this time to let us know your thoughts as we wrap up the Year of Excellent Service initiative! Please keep in mind that, while your name will not be shared with your comments, we may be pulling from these responses to share at our East Region Staff Day on December 13th!

\* Required

Your Name \*

Your answer

---

What aspects of YES went well? \*

Your answer

---

What would you change if we were to do it all over again? \*

Your answer

---

How have you applied your YES training inside or outside of work? \*

Your answer

---

# YES! December

- Region-wide staff meeting
- Shared feedback
- Introduced training initiative for 2018...



# YES! Staff Feedback

- Pickle videos were fun and created a memorable phrase shared by all staff
- Real scenarios helped & knowing they came from staff brains was appreciated.
- Staff scenarios used to create new content, which reinforced management team members were engaging
- Kept customer service and patron experience on our minds
- There are many (good!) ways to problem solve/give pickles
- Theory and topics have been applied at work and beyond!
- Balanced big picture with library specifics
- Online submission was handy
- Staff in our region have great ideas!
- Our group is very dedicated to and love our jobs <3



# YES! Staff Feedback

- Activities were too frequent and/or Activities were too time-consuming
- Some like more A/V delivery some less
- Repetition helps ideas stick but more variety is also needed
- Some liked consistency between positions others prefer job-specific
- Manager feedback requested and appreciated
- Need to be very clear that this is part of job expectations, and cannot be completed at home/off the clock
- We can use the resources available to us to not reinvent the wheel – Training Department (while mindful of their time, because they have existing priorities and limited resources, so be reasonable)
- Staff are seeking more opportunities to engage in discussion around activities

# YES! Outcomes

- Improve patron experience within East region
- Recognize all KCLS positions provide customer service
- Staff should feel empowered to problem solve
- Connect Excellent Customer Service to Mission, Vision, & Values

# YES! What We learned

- How to handle negative feedback and / or lack of enthusiasm
- Realized not all staff are going to love it or appreciate it
- Creativity and resourcefulness in planning
- Importance of Management Team buy-in
  - Decide what level of accountability, buy-in, and follow thru
- When a theme resonates with staff – run with it!
- Staff are more comfortable giving feedback anonymously but...
- We need to plan better but recognize the need to be flexible

# Year 2: YETI!

Year of Epic Teamwork Initiative



# Why:

- Strengthen existing teams
- Promote cross-functional teamwork
- Opportunities for group work and discussion

# What:

- 5 bi-monthly activities that focused on Teamwork
- Sent via email and staff were expected to respond
- Utilized existing and / or free and low-cost resources
- Create better working relationships (internal customer service)

# Difference between **YES!** & **YETI**

## **YES!**

- Patron Focus (external)
- Individual Assignments
- PC-Based
- Skills Building

## **YETI!**

- Team Focus
- Group work + individual reflections
- Hands-on Activities
- Culture Building
- Made it “fun”

# YETI: Management Planning

Teamwork is not just at your work location!

November Cardboard Challenge

May  
hynola.com  
teamwork foundations

July-  
Coach  
YETI Scavenger Hunt  
half clue on-line  
get rest from supervisor

November Bring to All Staff Day

March Skills match  
Growing together  
Terrarium or Partner  
Knitting together, Coloring, Quilt, Baking friendship bread

January  
① Best team  
Worst team  
why?

② Post around bldgs  
what the best team attributes are (one word)  
Magnetize for staff to post on fridge

③ what was this Charac teams  
what current that pre

September Goals: Dev work



# YETI: January / February

- Word Cloud

\* ① Please take a moment and reflect on your best team experience.  
What words characterize your best experience?



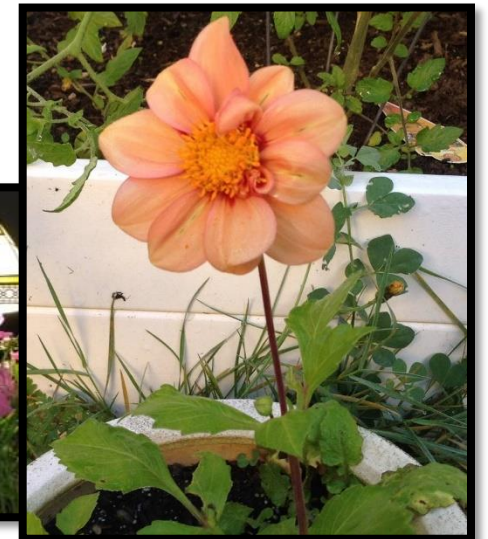
# YETI: March / April

- Growing Together

- Let staff choose between growing a flower from seed or coloring project
- Had them respond to the following questions:

1. How did you feel about the energy you put into these projects? How are activities like these constructive for us as a team?

2. When you do something creative during your work hours, how does it inspire and transform your duties at work?



**YETI: May**

**Oops...**

# YETI: June / July

- Team Commitments

\* 2. Pick **two** responses that you think the East Region should adopt as Team Commitments. **As the East Region, we will:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Support each other in supporting the community and our patrons  | <input type="checkbox"/> Bring out the best in each other!  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be kind   | <input type="checkbox"/> Be kind and respectful   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Always be encouraging and supportive of each other  | <input type="checkbox"/> Be mindful of our interactions AND their impacts                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be professional. Use humor wisely. Give 'em the pickle.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Lift each other up   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be empathetic and compassionate   | <input type="checkbox"/> Always Support Each Other  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appreciate other people's work styles   | <input type="checkbox"/> Appreciate/enjoy the people, enjoy the job, stop sweating the small things!! |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Remember all the kind encouragement and wonderful help I received these past few weeks as a new trainee, thanks everyone! | <input type="checkbox"/> Be helpful and courteous   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage, Actively listen, Support one another, Take time to show your appreciation for one another                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrate how we value our colleagues through deeds and words              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Be kind and considerate to everyone   | <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain a positive attitude   |



# YETI: August / September

- Creating Gracious Space  
Presented by Pat Hughes



\* 3. What is one thing you will incorporate into your work life from this video?

# YETI: October / November

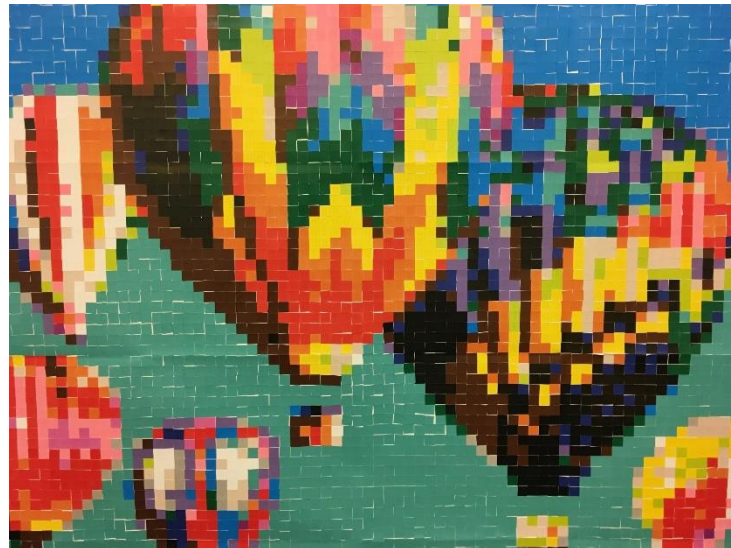
- Working Together to Help Others: Management Team coordinated service opportunities benefitting local non-profits

3. How can doing for others enhance teamwork?



# Random Acts of YETI!

- Sticker Mural
- Tent City Meals
- Mini-Morning-Meetings



# YETI: Staff Feedback

\* 4. What did you learn from YETI?

\* 5. What was successful about YETI?

\* 6. What suggestions do you have for making future initiatives stronger?

7. Is there anything else you would like the East Region Management Team to know regarding YETI or the meeting held on 12/11/18?



# **YETI: Management Feedback**

- Felt more fun
  - Notable change in staff attitudes
- Increase in camaraderie among staff and management team
- Improved communication
- Helped to unify the region
- Felt it was worth the \$\$\$'s of staff time

# Costs Associated with **YES!** & **YETI**

- Pickle Training Videos
- Pickle Paraphernalia
- Manager & Staff time
- Word Cloud Posters
- Coloring Supplies
- Seeds and planting supplies
- Team Commitment Posters

# Best Practices

- This is a lot of work. Prepare yourselves.
- Consider the size of your budget. Lots of \$\$\$'s doesn't = quality
- Put time into planning...and be willing to change plans
- Build in time for staff to complete assignments
- Individualize your initiative...but you don't have to reinvent the wheel
- Utilize existing free resources available to you
- Celebrate Your Results – you did this!

# Activity

Brainstorm: What training initiative(s) might benefit your workgroup?

# Activity

Discuss: Pick your top initiative (or two) and talk with your neighbor

# Activity

Expand: Find a new neighbor - What are the pros and cons, the barriers, the desired changes? What resources are available? What tools can you use?

# Activity

Share it with all of us!

# Questions & Answers

Presenters:

Michele Drov Dahl, Regional Manager

Amanda Hirst, Supervising Librarian

Amber Wright, Operations Manager

John Allman, Assistant Operations Manager



# Creating a Year-Long Training Focus on a Shoestring Budget

In 2017 KCLS's East Region initiated an annual focus area. The goal was to highlight providing excellent customer service, especially through encouraging staff to make empowered decisions, balance policy with flexibility, and prioritize patron experience. The result was the Year of Excellent Service, or YES.

## Improvising YES, and...

- Provide consistent direction regionally
- Act in response to patron comments
- Keep the patron experience as focus
- Support service culture at all levels
- Initiate and encourage discussions
- Apply policies flexibly when appropriate
- Tie-in with mid-year updates to Mission, Vision, Values, and Strategic Focus

## What We Did

Management Team created 10 months of activities using the following resources:

- TED Talk: "Hospitality on Broadway"
- Lynda.com series: "Customer Service Foundations," parts 1-4
- KCLS Training Department (paid content)
  - Give 'Em the Pickle
  - What's Your Pickle
- Library customer service scenarios
  - Created from staff suggestions
  - Informed later activities

## What Went Well +/-

- Pickle videos were fun and created a memorable phrase shared by all staff
- Real scenarios helped & knowing they came from staff brains was appreciated.
- Staff scenarios used as later content reinforced management engagement
- Kept patron experience on our minds
- There are many (good!) ways to problem solve/give pickles
- Theory and topics have been applied at work and beyond!
- Balanced big picture with library specific
- Online submission was handy
- Staff in our region have great ideas!
- Our group is overall very dedicated

## How We Did It

Staff received an email on the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month, with a deadline of the 25<sup>th</sup>

- Worksheets from Lynda.com
- Google Forms & Google Sheets
  - [bit.ly/june2017YES](http://bit.ly/june2017YES)
  - [bit.ly/july2017YES](http://bit.ly/july2017YES)
  - [bit.ly/august2017YES](http://bit.ly/august2017YES)
  - [bit.ly/september2017YES](http://bit.ly/september2017YES)
  - [bit.ly/october2017YES](http://bit.ly/october2017YES)
  - [bit.ly/november2017YES](http://bit.ly/november2017YES)
- Management Team Responses

## What We Learned +/-

- Activities were too frequent and/or
- Activities were too time-consuming
- Some like more A/V delivery some less
- Repetition helps ideas stick but more variety is also needed
- Some liked consistency between positions others prefer job-specific
- Manager responses requested and when delivered were appreciated
- Need to be very clear that this is expected of all staff and on work time
- We can use the resources available to us – online patron-facing resources
- Staff are seeking more opportunities to engage in discussion around activities

# Creating a Year-Long Training Focus on a Shoestring Budget

In 2018 KCLS's East Region took the idea of customer service, which previously focused on *external* customer service, to dive into *internal* customer service. Without losing sight of the patron experience, the goals shifted to improving our teamwork skills, encouraging more positive workplace environments, and embracing a culture of appreciation. The result was the Year of Epic Teamwork Initiative, or YETI.

## What We Did

Management Team created the following 5 bimonthly activities for reflection:

- Best and Worst Team Experiences
- Growing Together
- Team Commitments
- TEDx: Creating Gracious Space
- Working Together to Help Others
- Staff Feedback

## How We Did It

Staff received an email on the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month, with a deadline of the 25<sup>th</sup> the following month

- <http://bit.ly/eastYETI1>
- <http://bit.ly/eastYETI2>
- <http://bit.ly/eastYETI3>
- <http://bit.ly/eastYETI4>
- <http://bit.ly/eastYETI5>
- <http://bit.ly/eastYETIx>

## What Went Well +/-

- Participant feedback from the first year was key in how we built the second year
- Staff had fun! Interactive and hands-on activities were appreciated and made a bigger impact than we first expected
- Able to be flexible and improvise
- Tangible products were created based on the submissions of staff reflections

## What We Learned +/-

- Some staff still resistant/not a priority
- Be mindful of amount of time needed for participants and activity creators
- Prioritize planning process to have a fully fleshed out product
- Need self-assessments at start and end of initiative to measure impact

## YETI Sightings

We have heard and been part of more frequent conversations around the topic of teamwork. Staff really embraced the opportunity of hands-on activities that encouraged working together across job titles. Anecdotally, we have also observed staff planning and working together in collaboration with one another. There was a mix of enthusiasm and reluctance, but some staff are actively providing positive statements about the impacts they are seeing to our workplace culture. Staff are still completing the final round of YETI activities. We will collect feedback after our Region's annual team meeting in December.

# BUILD YOUR OWN TRAINING INITIATIVE WORKSHEET

Prepare the following information before creating your training initiative.

## TRAINING TOPIC:


## GOALS:


## TIME COMMITMENT:

Planning / Creation Timeline	
6 months in advance	
3 months in advance	
Launch Date	
Staff Time Allowance / Activity	

## BUDGET :

Friends or Foundation	
Grants	
Discretionary	
Other	

## **RESOURCES:**

<b>People / Staff</b>	
<b>Databases / Electronic</b>	
<b>Training Dept.</b>	
<b>Local Expertise</b>	
<b>Free Online</b>	
<b>Other</b>	

## **BONUS:**

<b>Clever Acronym or Title</b>	
--------------------------------	--