+3: Adding Student Tech Support To Your Library

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Background (Why +3?)

Originally, 3 student tech workers.

3 service points at our combined desk.
History

UW-Parkside Library combined its reference and circulation desk in April 2012.

The library was merged with Campus Technology Services in May 2015.
How can we collaborate?
The Library has been the busiest computer lab on campus for years.
The library increased the number of desktop computers from 32 in 2011 to 56 by 2014. Mac Desktops were added in 2013.

As a result, there was more need for technical help.
An increasing number of technical questions were being asked.

No back-ups in place for staff that knew how to troubleshoot.

Technical information was being miscommunicated.
Summer 2015

The library asked if we could collaborate with Campus Technology Services with staffing for the combined desk in the library.
Why Students?

More relatable to their peers.

Job experience for majors.

Know more about day-to-day uses of some software than professional staff.
Are we going to use CTS students or library students?

What are their hours going to be?

Who is going to train them?

Where will they sit?
Two student workers for the library: one a Computer Science major; one was a Management Information Systems major.

They were used to library systems and software.

The library asked CTS for a recommendation for a third student.
1 Hours
Hours were difficult to figure out.

Used Gimlet to run stats plus anecdotal evidence.
Busiest hours for all questions were Monday - Thursday: 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

**Anecdotal Evidence:** Weird and hard to answer questions on Sundays. Sometimes.

**Preliminary hours** were 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Monday-Thursday. 2 p.m. - 6 p.m. Sundays
The Experiment Begins
The trial started Fall 2015. We had 2 library students weekdays and a CTS student on weekend.
How do we train them?
Lab manager trains them on special software accessible to CTS students and employees.

Rest of the training was on-the-job.
Where should they sit?
Originally, they sit facing the doors as students enter.

Staff were noticing that students using computers are not noticing tech students.

Solution: Move to other end of the desk closer to the computers. More visible. Small signage to make noticeable.
4 Stuff we learned
Where the students sit matters. A lot. Make sure they have some visibility.
On the job training works. Students gradually figured out persistent issues and how to solve them.
Make sure EVERYONE that works the desk is consistently informed of hours of service.
Total tech questions asked Fall 2015

237 of those questions were asked between 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Monday - Thursday

129 of those were answered by student tech workers.
2

Total tech questions asked Fall 2015 on Sundays.
Changes for the Spring Semester
Sundays taken out of schedule.

Had to scale back hours on Mondays-Thursdays because of class schedules for workers so now 12-2.

Not a huge deal because 11-12 was the quiet period in those hours.
Takeaways

If you have students that are interested in technology and are comfortable learning on the job, this will work.

It helps if they already know library protocol.
THE FUTURE?
Thanks!

ANY QUESTIONS?

You can find me at doughert@uwp.edu
CREDITS

Special thanks to all the people who made and released these awesome resources for free:

- Presentation template by SlidesCarnival
- Photographs by Unsplash