Cross-Training for a Flexible Staff

Cross-Training for a Flexible Staff
An *Infopeople* Webinar

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12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m.

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Agenda

- Why cross-train your staff?
- Selecting employees for cross-training
- Practical considerations
- Cross-training for job enrichment and career advancement
- Cross-training caveats

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POLL: Are you…

- Library Director
- Other manager or supervisor
- Front-line staff

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Cross-Training for a Flexible Staff

What's in it for the Library?

- Use the chat to brainstorm ideas from a manager's point of view

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Benefits for the Library

- Knowledge management
- Succession planning
  - Plan for retirements
  - Respond to younger workers' desire to build résumés and prepare to move up
- Meet customer needs
  - Manage family and medical leaves of staff
  - Manage tight staffing/hiring freezes

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What's in it for Staff?

- Use the chat to brainstorm ideas from the point of view of staff

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Cross-Training for a Flexible Staff

Benefits for Staff

- Challenge
- Learning
- Résumé builder for internal and external jobs
- Improved teamwork

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Where to Start?

- Current or upcoming job vacancy
- Need to correct errors or be more efficient
  - Staff need or want to know more about how other departments work
  - Staff want others to know what they do
- Staff unable to pitch in and serve customers from other departments

People First, or Jobs First?

Your last name begins with A-L
- Use the chat window to brainstorm the benefits of using selected **PEOPLE** to begin your cross-training effort

Your last name begins with M-Z
- **Watch** the brainstorm and think about their reasons. You'll have an opportunity to respond in a minute.

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Now Let's Switch

Your last name begins with M-Z
- Use the chat window to brainstorm the benefits of using selected **JOBS** to begin your cross-training effort

Your last name begins with A-L
- **Watch** them brainstorm and think about their reasons.

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Selecting Employees for Cross-Training

- Where will cross-training get the job done more effectively or efficiently?

- Who is likely to be successful?
  - Same or similar job classification
  - Pilot with champions

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Examples

- Children's and Adult Services librarians
  - Goal vs. mandate (Carroll County, MD)
- Structured and scheduled job enrichment opportunities
  - Voluntary, open to all levels (Yale University Library)
- Core and Elective Continuing Education (Tulsa, OK)
  - *Handout #1: Cross Training as Continuing Education*

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Cross-Training for a Flexible Staff

Poll: Which Job Pair?

Choose a job pair you're familiar with. We'll use it in some examples.

1. Adult and Children's Services librarians

2. Circulation and Technical Services clericals

3. ILL and Digitization paraprofessionals

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Practical Considerations

- *Handout #2: Notes for Developing a Cross-Training Plan*

- Be clear about why
    - Promoting understanding, or making lasting changes?

- Tell staff what to expect: who, why, how, and when!

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What Will Staff Learn?

- Determine core functions of the jobs in which staff will be cross-trained

- What is the depth of training needed?

- What will success look like?

- Staff involvement is key to getting it right

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Cross-Training for a Flexible Staff

What Needs to Happen?

- Determine what training resources already exist
  - *Handout #3 is an example of a checklist to help Adult librarians being cross trained in Children's*
- Decide who is responsible and accountable for training
- Provide opportunities to practice new skills
- Update job descriptions and performance management tools

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Opportunities for Staff

- If you want to provide career development opportunities for staff, what else might be important?

- Use chat to tell us what you think

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Cross-Training for Job Enrichment and Career Advancement

- What might be important?
  - Develop a structure so it actually happens
  - Can promise the opportunity to learn, have their work seen by others, and become a strong competitor for promotion (vs. promising a promotion)

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Cross-Training for a Flexible Staff

Barriers to Cross-Training

Last name begins with M-Z
- Use the chat window to brainstorm as many barriers to cross-training as you can think of

Last name begins with A-L
- Think about those barriers, because you'll have a chance to respond in a minute.

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Remove Those Barriers!

Last name begins with A-L
- Use the chat window to brainstorm as many ways around those barriers as you can.

Last name begins with M-Z
- Watch to see how many of the barrier-busting strategies you agree with!

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Cross-Training Caveats

- Stay within the jobs' scope and level of responsibility
- Work within union agreements
- Avoid the appearance of favoritism
- Keep communicating and listening

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Q&A

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Web Links

- Two examples of academic library programs
  - Yale University Library Cross Training Initiative for Library Staff:
    www.library.yale.edu/training/stod/xtrain/crosstraining.html
  - Cross Training for Professional Development—Dartmouth College:
    www.dartmouth.edu/~library/home/committees/.../crosstraining%20final.doc

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Thank You!

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