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ILS 565-S70 Library Management

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In-basket Exercise

The Metrono Library

The Metrono Library is a special library located at Mejour University. The Library Director under the direction of the Chair of the Board of Trustees is working to improve staff performance and the quality of service to patrons.

Prioritized List of Messages

Here is how I would prioritize the newly received messages on Monday morning. After I respond to the first five messages, it might be 11:04 AM and I will need to leave for a luncheon and workshop. I will have spent 20 minutes prioritizing the messages and 1 hour and 40 minutes responding to them. If time remains, I will continue responding to messages.

“Re: The Technical Services Position”

Response method: E-mail the Search and Screen Committee **Summary:** Ask for further explanation of why the candidate was selected. Request a training plan. Remind committee that staff cannot be hired based on family. A response is needed by Tuesday morning. **Rationale:** I do not agree with this decision, but since a committee decided I will let them make their case. I would not call Merle because she sent messages about other concerns that I do not have time for now. I need a response by Tuesday morning so that I could call the candidate in the afternoon.

“Re: Ad Hoc Task Force of Personnel Recision” Part I

Response method: E-mail Hector **Summary:** Expect my list Tuesday afternoon **Rationale:**

This is a high priority because it is due Tuesday and relates to improving the library. The message is after “The Technical Services Position” because if the candidate really is unqualified, the position could be cut.

“Computers on Fritz”

Response Method: Phone Diane **Summary:** Ask her to describe the problem. If she is unable to describe it, I will go to her desk. I will call IT and describe the problem. Ask for a solution by phone. Recommend that Diane speak with Human Resources about how the IT staff treats her.

Rationale: If Diane cannot work due to computer problems she will fall behind in her required tasks, lowering the library’s quality.

Overflowing Toilet

Response method: Delegate by phone to Diane **Summary:** Instruct Diane to contact the physical plant office so they can send a member of their staff or a plumber. Diane will tell Elmo when the toilet should be fixed. **Rationale:** An overflowing toilet cannot be ignored. The water could damage the collection and library’s image. This should be addressed after the computer problem because Diane will be unable or unwilling to complete the task without a computer.

This message must be responded to before I tell Elmo to clean the windows. I am calling Diane because it will be easier explain the task by phone than by E-mail.

Spot Audits

Response method: E-mail Hector, send memo to library staff **Summary:** Thank Hector. Tell him that I am reminding the staff of appropriate conduct. Send a memo to library staff reminding them of policy regarding Internet use, timely arrival, coffee breaks, and electricity use. Refer to the intranet policy site. Also, remind staff that supervisors should report individuals who violate

policy. Mention that I have received questions regarding policy and more specific responses will be sent soon. **Rationale:** This message is important because it involves the entire library staff and relates to the goal of improving the staff and service. A spot audit could occur at any time so the message must be handled immediately.

Phone call from Hector about windows

Response method: Delegate window cleaning to Elmo by memo **Summary:** I would tell Elmo to clean the windows. I would mention that the toilet will be fixed. **Rationale:** Since Elmo works in the afternoon and evening, I will send a memo because I will not be in the office to speak to him. He probably does not use a computer at work as often as other staff so E-mail will not be effective. This needs to be resolved soon because Hector perceives it as part of library's larger problems. The toilet must be fixed first so that Elmo will clean the windows in a timely manner.

“Re: Ad Hoc Task Force of Personnel Recision” Part II (To be completed on Tuesday)

Response Method: E-mail Hector **Summary:** After researching job descriptions and personnel performance, send the requested list of positions that could be cut. The response of the Search and Screen Committee to my message about the Technical Services position will also be considered. **Rationale:** I will send the list via E-mail so that Hector can reference it easily. Since my appointment to the task force is not public, I only have the options of E-mail and phone. (My administrative assistant does not have access to my E-mail account or phone messages.)

“Internet abuse?”

Response Method: E-mail Al **Summary:** Thank Al. I will discuss this with Merle. **Rationale:** This message is a higher priority than others because computer misuse was one of the specific concerns mentioned by Hector when he told me about site audits. I would call Merle on the phone or meet with her in person to discuss this issue without accusing her.

“Late Employee”

Response Method: E-mail to Al **Summary:** Al should be sure that Ralph understands the library’s policies. Instruct Al to keep notes on tardiness and excessive breaks for staff that report to him. Provide guidance on what a pattern of tardiness is based on my experience and information from human resources. **Rationale:** This is a higher priority than other messages because it relates to my effort to improve staff performance.

“Deadbeats”

Response method: Phone Merle **Summary:** Clarify the situation. Is there a pattern of particular patrons refusing to pay fines or is this a generalization? There is no need to contact Mr. Muki. Remind Merle that the important thing is getting the books back. Merle should wave the fines and record the problem. I am willing to speak with the accused patrons. **Rationale:** I delayed response so that Merle could calm down. This is a problem, but the response to the patrons cannot be emotional. I want to call Merle to clarify what is happening. It is a higher priority than other messages because it relates to customer service.

“Pornography (again)”

Response method: Phone Merle **Summary:** No filters needed yet. Merle should instruct her weekend staff to be more vigilant in watching the computers. Do they know who is doing this? It would be better to take away one person’s library privileges than install a filter. Merle should keep notes on problem. We will consider filters if it continues. **Rationale:** Responding by phone allows me to find out what is already being done to stop the problem. This is a low priority because the weekend is still a few days away. However, this message is not the lowest priority because it involves the public perception of the library.

Wants hot office

Response Method: Phone Sylvia. Ask Diane by phone to research having a cover installed over the thermostat so that I am the only one who can change it. (Normally delegated to Head of Technical Services) **Summary:** Remind Sylvia of university rules regarding temperature settings and that she should be respectful of Mia in addition to Mia being respectful towards her. Tell Sylvia that a thermostat cover will be installed. **Rationale:** This is a squabble between two staff members. I would not respond immediately so that its importance is not elevated. I would respond to Sylvia first because she would not listen to me if she thought I was ignoring her seniority. I know there is not seniority in this library.

Wants cold office

Response Method: Phone Mia (normally delegated to Head of Technical Services) **Summary:** Thank Mia. While there is no seniority there must still be mutual respect between employees. I will check in on the Technical Services office more frequently and have a thermostat cover installed. **Rationale:** This is important because it deals with an employee's treatment on the job and saving money. This message would be responded to last because other messages deal with problems that affect a larger portion of the library.

Overall Rationale

I took into account any deadlines that were specified in messages. Also, I took the emphasis from Hector Muki on getting the library into good working order to mean that improving the staff's work and service to patrons was important. The library must also be clean. Messages relating to these ideas received higher priority.