

Exercise #4

We Need a Policy

For a selected policy scenario, discuss the situation, and answer the questions as a group.

SCENARIO #1 All Charged Up

Your branch is old, with a limited number of outlets on the public floor. The two or three laptop users already fight over the best spot to sit, where they can plug in for hours and have peace and quiet. Staff is personally telling people who wind power cords around chairs or across aisles that this isn't safe and they need to move, but you don't have this as a policy and your clerk was almost brought to tears by a laptop user who challenged her loudly.

This same laptop user came in today to find his favorite spot taken by a teenager who was using the outlet to recharge a cell phone. He told the teen to move because laptop use was "real" library use, and the teen refused, saying he had as much right to use the outlet to charge a cell phone as the man did to use a laptop. This turned into a shouting match between the two, with the teen using profanity.

Staff wants a policy and a written document to enforce it. Library Administration says it is up to you to create a branch specific policy, as the other branches have more outlets and don't have the problem.

Create a policy, and design the written piece you would post and/or give to the public.

SCENARIO #2 Newspaper Hog

Every morning the first person in the door is an elderly man. He collects the current day's papers of three subscriptions, and takes them all to his desk to read one at a time. Other people look for the papers, and when they discover he has them all, though he is only reading one, they want staff to go get the others. When approached nicely, he says he wants the papers available to him when he is ready, and he got to them first.

What is needed here? Create it, then design any written piece to go with it, or describe any training you would do.

SCENARIO #3 Yucky Restroom

Your branch has two restrooms, with two stalls each, currently labeled Men and Women. When someone wants to use the restroom, they just pick up the key from a box on the corner of the counter and return it when they are done. In the past three weeks, seven times someone has come to the desk to say the Men's room has urine or feces on the floor. Each time, you have to close the restroom and call out custodial to clean it, forcing everyone to use the other restroom. This results in lines during busy times, and custodial is complaining about the call outs.

What is your problem? What should you do? Write anything you would need to write, devise training you would do, and discuss how you would handle any change with the public?