

Connecting Services to Values: Whiteboard Communication

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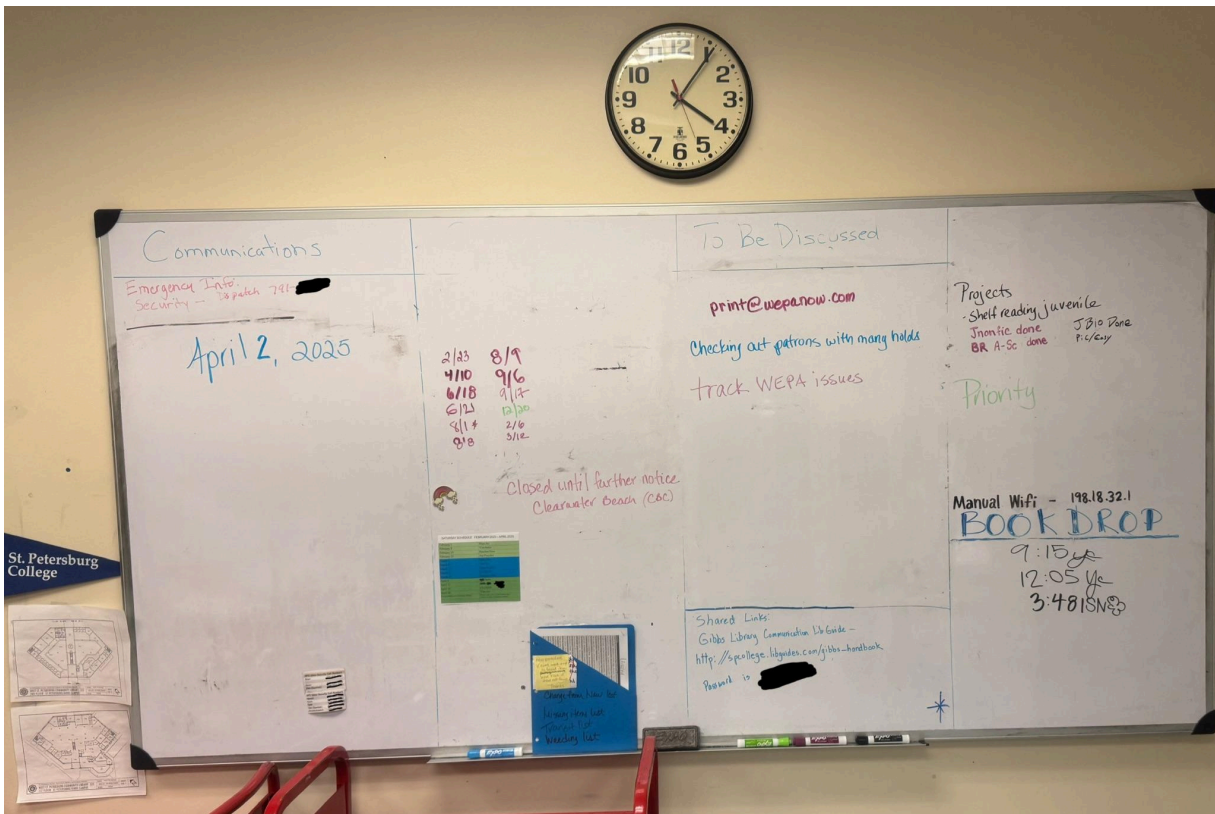
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The photo I selected for this assignment was one I took of our communication board at the St. Petersburg West Community Library on the St. Petersburg College's Gibbs campus (See Figure 1). The board serves as a communication and coordination hub for library staff, tying directly to managing human resources and the management concepts of communication, coordination, and managing tasks. I chose this photo because effective human resource coordination is crucial for making sure things run smoothly and that day to day operations are in line with the mission, vision, and values of an information organization.

Figure 1

Library Staff Communication Whiteboard. Photographed by Peter Krauss



Through open and visible communication, this whiteboard is the go to for dealing with issues, tracking and tackling tasks, and coordinating with coworkers. Starting outside of the whiteboard, we have the clock, key to staying on top of responsibilities and assisting us in making sure we get things done on time. There's also a map of the first and second floor of the building, so that we may direct patrons and have an understanding of where rooms are. This is especially helpful when someone asks which room an event is in.

Within the whiteboard, at the top right of the first column, we have our emergency line. Below that is the date, and a list of any staff that are out for the day (all staff were on campus this day), and staff phone numbers. All of these ensure that we're on top of things: that we can contact security if needed, be reminded of the date, know which coworkers are out, and, if necessary, contact a coworker.

In the middle left column, we have a list of dates tracking certain issues we've had with locked doors, which helps with providing information to the campus. We also track important info on other libraries in the county (like the Clearwater Beach library being closed from Hurricane Helene). Below that, the green and blue paper has the staff Saturday schedule, and in the blue folder is our weeding list.

In the middle right column, we have a list of topics that need to be discussed at our next meeting. These discussion topics help keep everyone on the same page, and talk over things that might improve patron experience. For example, the discussion topics we discussed here were to track issues with our printing system for IT, and to ensure that we don't overlook a few books when checking out multiple holds. Below that is a shared libguide with its password, assisting us with more information that helps our day to day operations.

In the rightmost column are our projects, and the priority project (empty here). This gives us clarity on what needs to be done in what order it ought to be done. Then is the manual wifi code, and our record of daily book drops. If a book drop hasn't been done in a while, we can easily see it, and know it's time to do one.

There are a variety of management concepts this relates to. Tracking printing issues, using a libguide, and exhibiting the printer email and wifi code are aspects of technology implementation. Weeding lists and shelf reading projects are a part of our collection development strategy, but the element depicted the most in my photo is staff coordination. Almost every part of the picture reflects the strong work culture we have. It's a culture where we value teamwork, transparency, and accountability; a workplace where the day-to-day operations run smoothly and the patrons are put first.

In the broader context of public libraries, having open and clear communication like this serves a greater purpose. It balances efficiency and clarity in staff coordination, and does so within the budget and resource limitations. It also builds a strong team, leads to less confusion, and motivates employees in the way pointed out in the textbook *Information Services Today* (Mackenzie-Ruppel, Haller, & Goch, 2022).

Ultimately, the whiteboard at my library serves as a living document that reflects a culture of teamwork and shared responsibility, proactive management, and a coordinated staff. It represents good management insights on handling tasks, tech integration, and open communication as well as demonstrates how having a visual aid can simplify roles and lead to patron service improvement. As I continue in my career, I'll be sure to use similar methods in fostering organized, ethical, and collaborative teams of library staff.

References

Mackenzie-Ruppel, M. L., Haller, B., & Goch, R. (2022). 25. *Managing Human Resources*. In S. Hirsh (Ed.), *Information services today: An introduction* (p. 313). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/usf/detail.action?docID=6891082>