

Flip Your Focus and Think Like A Reader: RA Basics Renovated

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*Matinées du Rendez-vous des
bibliothèques publiques du Québec*

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Libraries Pivot Back to Books



Becky Spratford

@RAforAll

...

2020 could be my year of I told you so to all the library ppl who told me 5 years ago that no one wants [#ReadAdv](#) training, that libraries were repositioning as a "third space," focusing on our buildings, that we were "more than books," that no one would want or need my training

2:39 PM · Jul 8, 2020 · Twitter Web App



Becky Spratford

@RAforAll

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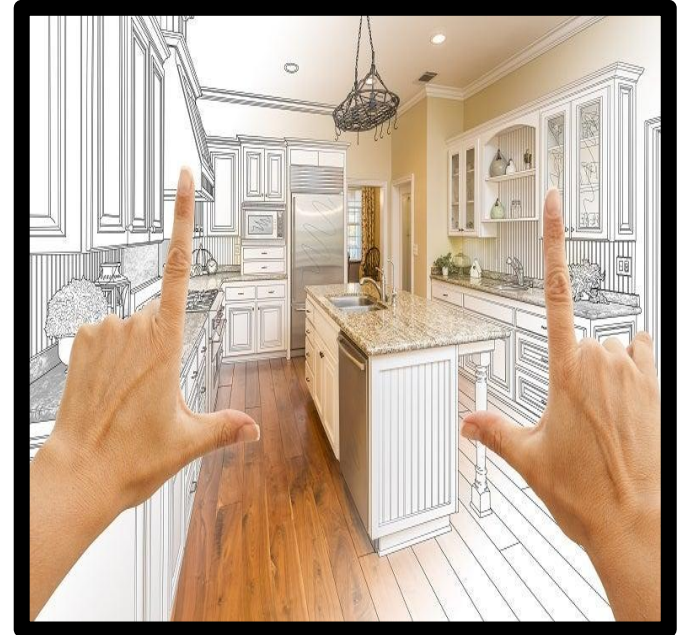
Replying to [@RAforAll](#)

I could do that, but I am too busy trying to fill all the requests for [#ReadAdv](#) training you all need right now.

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Relationships vs Transactions

- Evolution of RA service
- Shift in emphasis
means...time to renovate!
- 4 easy to replicate segments
 - Or renovate my ideas and turn them into your own
- RA Service is 60% Listening,
40% Action



Share

- Expand the concept of sharing books in your library
- More than “sharing” of items
- Share the joy of a good read
- Normalize sharing your preferences



When to Share

- Booktalk at every opportunity
 - Between staff and with patrons
 - Advertises expertise and willingness
 - And then gamify it to get more to join
- Share about books you haven't read
 - Use the words of others
- Help! What do I share? That's next...

Conversation Starters

- Creating relationships NOT tallying transactions
- Dialog NOT monologue
- Talking about books, book news NOT making a match
- [Why NOT what](#)
- Listen and learn



Conversation Starters Examples

- In person-- have fun “why” questions:
 - What’s your least fav book? What’s your fav to recommend? Where do you get book recommendations for yourself? What was the most fun you had reading a book in the last year?
- Socially Distant: [Curbside Passive RA](#)
- Online-- [Unboxing Videos](#)
- Both-- [interactive displays](#)
- Both-- [use props](#)
 - Grab an item in person or post it online and share why you picked it

The Art of the Handoff

- More important than the “right” suggestion
- Think RELATIONSHIP not TRANSACTION.
 - You want them to come back
- Make sure you are inclusive



Handoff Examples

- Explain the why and use their words
 - Prove you heard them
- Encourage feedback-->conversations-->relationships
 - “Come back and tell me what you thought”
- Give more reasons/reassurance to take items home
 - These also create relationships
 - [Fine Free!](#)

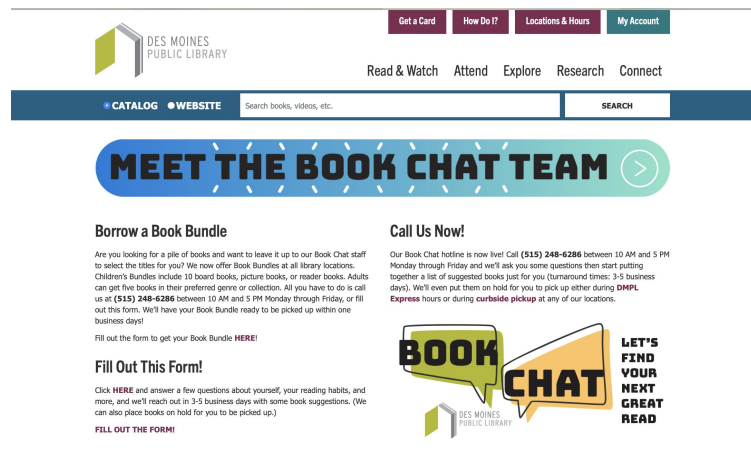
Inspiring All Staff To Help

- Working together is your best resource.
- Real talk...You will never know all the books!
- All staff can be part of core service.
- The more staff included, the more diverse your pool of suggestions.



Working Together Examples

- Don't wait for volunteers
 - [invite participation](#)
- [Goodreads Shelves](#)
- [Stock Your RA Pantry](#)
- Did you listen to patrons?
 - Use what they have shared.
- Covid Success Story:
 - [Des Moines Public Library](#)
 - [Their Goodreads](#)



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MEET THE BOOK CHAT TEAM

Borrow a Book Bundle

Are you looking for a pile of books and want to leave it up to our Book Chat staff to select the titles for you? We now offer Book Bundles at all library locations. Children's Bundles include 10 board books, picture books, or reader books. Adults can get five books in their preferred genre or collection. All you have to do is call us at (515) 248-6286 between 10 AM and 5 PM Monday through Friday, or fill out this form. We'll have your Book Bundle ready to be picked up within one business days!

Fill out the form to get your Book Bundle [HERE!](#)

Fill Out This Form!

Click [HERE](#) and answer a few questions about yourself, your reading habits, and more, and we'll reach out in 3-5 business days with some book suggestions. (We can also place books on hold for you to be picked up.)

FILL OUT THE FORM!

Call Us Now!

Our Book Chat hotline is now live! Call (515) 248-6286 between 10 AM and 5 PM Monday through Friday and we'll ask you some questions then start putting together a list of suggested books just for you (turnaround times: 3-5 business days). We'll even put them on hold for you to pick up either during DMPL Express hours or during curbside pickup at any of our locations.

BOOK CHAT

LET'S FIND YOUR NEXT GREAT READ

Final Thoughts

- Relationships not Transactions
 - Use this “renovation” as inspiration
- Share, Converse, Handoff, Work Together
 - Make it fit your strengths, staff, and patrons
- RA Service is 60% Listening, 40% Action

Questions? Now or Later



- Becky Spratford
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 - [RA for All](#)
 - Twitter: [@RAforAll](#)
- Becky's [10 Rules of Basic RA Service](#) for more training and practice options
- [Shout out to Autumn Friedli](#)