

Charlotte Ford. *Crash Course in Reference*, Westport, Connecticut: Libraries Unlimited, 2008. 156p. \$30.00 (ISBN 978-1-59158-463-6)

Charlotte Ford's book entails a comprehensive overview of reference resources for library paraprofessionals, librarians returning to the library field and looking for a refresher, or individuals interested in career possibilities. There is mentioned that this would be a good resource for staff working in a small libraries. Each chapter ends with a summary, review and notes.

Starting with the question: "What is Reference Service?" Charlotte then goes on explaining by answering the question with examples of reference questions. For reference services you will be using your skills in communicating, searching, and evaluating as well as troubleshooting technology.

Some of the topics covered include:

Building and maintaining a reference collection. By knowing your community—what are the major types of businesses, the history, and the economics of the people—and who your library serves, you will be able to provide your patrons with a reference collection that will meet their needs.

Searching print and electronic resources covers searching techniques using printed material, understanding the structure of electronic sources and searching on the web using search engines. One of her suggestions when you come across a new reference material is to look at the title, check contents, checked out the introduction, skim through the pages—so if you haven't done that for this book now is a good time to start.

Chapters five through nine reviews the major types of reference sources such as finding books using the library catalog, articles using periodical indexes and databases, or background information using encyclopedias and definitions using the dictionary. In Chapter 8, Charlotte lists her "lucky seven" ready-reference sources. Many of these sources are available as a subscription or free on the Internet - good sources for a small library.

How can librarians use the Web to provide services to their patrons? Chapter 9 has some suggested websites with brief descriptions. Maybe, adding these sites to your library's website.

The last three chapters look at reference ethics and policies including the American Library Association's Code of Ethics, networking with other libraries and librarians and what to do if you want more.

I think this is a good book to keep as a reference tool. When time permits, go back and review the chapters searching the websites, checking out what your library owns, and even doing the review questions at the end of each chapter.

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