

Reflection: Writing Prompts

Midwest Data Librarian Symposium 2018

Monday, October 8, 2018

The Burden of Reliability

Writing Prompt 1

(5 minutes)

“I feel that my organization/supervisor expects _____ nines of reliability from me, and this expectation’s consequences for me are...”

Writing Prompt 2

(5 minutes)

“What does it mean about me if I am unreliable?”

Tuesday, October 9, 2018

The Refuge of Unreliability

Writing Prompt 1

(1 minute)

Jot down a few things you do that take time but don’t have much impact.

Writing Prompt 2

(1 minute)

Choose one of the things you generated in Prompt 1 and jot down some ideas that begin to build a case for not doing that thing, or for doing it less.

Reflection: Discussion Exercise

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Practice doing less, without fear

Partner with someone from a different institution, if possible. Identify which partner will be the client and which will be the helper. You will switch roles halfway through. If you are doing this exercise on your own after the Symposium, locate a trusted friend or colleague to talk to.

(20 minutes total, 10 minutes per person)

Client

Practice telling the story of the thing you want to stop doing. Use these guidelines as much or as little as they are helpful to you in telling this story:

- Present the task and your current view of it
- Explore options or alternative approaches to the task
- Decide what options or alternatives to pursue in ending or decreasing your involvement with the task

Helper

Be an active, non-evaluative listener during the client's story. This kind of listening requires you to practice some valuable skills:

- Resist the urge to identify with the person's problem or insert your own story into the conversation. This conversation is about *the client*, not you.
- Resist the urge to tell the client how to solve the problem. This conversation is effective when you support the client in talking through their own thoughts about the task.
- Ask open-ended questions about the task, such as, "What would happen if...?"
- Restate what you are hearing the client say. It may be helpful to separate facts, feelings, and values in these restatements, such as:
 - Facts: "What I hear you saying is..."
 - Feelings: "It sounds like this makes you feel..."
 - Values: "I hear that this is important to you because..."

Sources:

Birkinshaw, J. & Cohen, J. (2013). "Make time for the work that matters: How smart knowledge workers delegate tasks - or eliminate them altogether. (Managing Yourself)." *Harvard Business Review*, 91(9), 115-118. <https://hbr.org/2013/09/make-time-for-the-work-that-matters>

DeEtta Jones and Associates (n.d.). "The Helping Relationship." Library Management Skills Institute I: The Manager. Materials from 2018 institute.

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