

# Exploring Service Philosophy Statements Using Qualitative Content Analysis

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# Motivation



William Weare, Director of Public Services  
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# Service Philosophy Statements

Documents that speak directly to the user about how services and resources will be delivered during everyday interactions with library staff.

- Mission, Vision, Values: general language to describe *why* library service is important (aspirational)
- Service Philosophy Statements: specific language to describe *how* service will be delivered (practical)

# Example

## UNC Greensboro:

[https://library.uncg.edu/info/mission\\_statement.aspx](https://library.uncg.edu/info/mission_statement.aspx)

### Customer Service Values

The University Libraries (UL) currently are recognized as providing excellent service in terms of treating our customers with courtesy and respect and in providing a high level of library materials and resources; thus our primary goal is to build on and extend that tradition of excellence.

While the faculty, staff and students of the University are our first priority, everyone will receive courteous and friendly service, regardless of location and University affiliation. Employees of the Libraries are also customers and should be treated as such.

All UL staff will ensure that our customers receive timely, courteous, and accurate assistance. In order to create a service environment in which customers are valued, the Libraries must develop a work environment for all staff in which these service standards are reinforced and rewarded. We must provide an environment that encourages creativity and innovation in the delivery of our services. To these ends:

#### **We will empower our staff to provide highly-responsive service.**

- We will encourage staff to find creative ways to provide assistance and go the extra mile.
- We will provide ongoing training to enable and enrich our staff.
- We will give our employees the freedom to make decisions that help our customers.
- We will honor and recognize our employees for good customer service.

#### **We will create systems, services, and procedures with our customers' needs foremost in mind.**

- We will develop and deliver systems and services that are flexible, creative, and efficient.
- We will provide an environment which promotes follow-through in resolving questions and problems.

#### **We will value our customers through our actions and services.**

- We will be reliable, accountable, and have integrity in maintaining the confidentiality of our customers.
- We will be respectful of our diverse customers and respond to their needs.
- We will display empathy in our treatment of others - considering and respecting their points of view.
- We will communicate on the level of the customer - avoiding all jargon and explaining concepts clearly.

#### **We will make services easily accessible.**

- We will be alert and attentive as we move throughout the library, ready to offer assistance.
- We will strive to offer on site and remote services for the convenience of our customers.
- We will be mobile in helping customers, providing seamless service whenever possible.
- We will provide ways for customers to give us feedback on how we are adhering to these values.

# Qualitative Content Analysis

“the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns”

(Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1277)

# Our Framework

The model: An eight-step process outlined by Margrit Schreier:

1. Determine the research question
2. Select material for inclusion
3. Build a coding frame
4. Segment the material
5. Test the coding frame
6. Evaluate and modify the coding frame
7. Analyze the data
8. Communicate findings

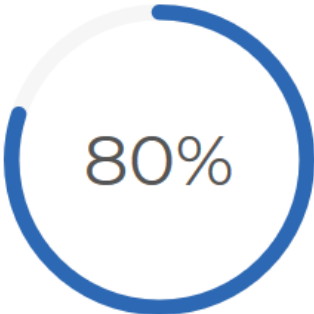
(Schreier, 2012, 2014)

# Selecting Material

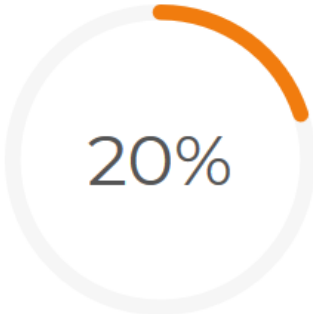
Does the document:

- Deliver a promise or pledge to library users?
- Speak directly to users?
- Address used needs?
- Focus on how service is delivered?
- Appear written by staff delivering the service?

# Sample Population



PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS



PRIVATE, NON-PROFIT

<https://www.cumuonline.org/cumu-members/current-members/>



HBCUs



HSIs



RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION



# The Coding Frame

A hierarchical arrangement of main categories and subcategories

<b>Form</b>	<b>Content</b>	
Person	Courtesy	Focus / Priority
Commissive Modality	Efficiency	Environment
Presentation	Effectiveness	Accommodation
Intended Audience	Continuous Improvement	Confidentiality
Author	Safety / Security	Access
	Dignity / Respect	Attentive / Listening

Main Categories

Subcategories

# Segmenting & Coding

**Segmentation:** “dividing the material into units in such a way that each unit fits into exactly one (sub)category of the coding frame” (Schreier, 2014, p. 178)

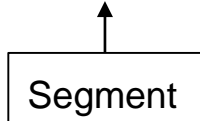
Library users have a right to expect **courteous**, ~~efficient~~, and ~~effective~~ service in all circumstances and at all times.

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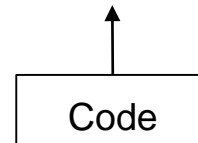
Library users have a right to expect ~~courteous~~, ~~efficient~~, and **effective** service in all circumstances and at all times.

**Coding:** a word or phrase describing the text assigned to concepts and ideas found in the text

Library users have a right to expect **courteous**, ~~efficient~~, and ~~effective~~ service in all circumstances and at all times.



COURTESY



# Testing & Revising

Pilot coding to test the coding frame and identify issues using 2 of the 8 statements

<b>Concept-Driven Subcategories</b>
Courtesy
Efficiency
Effectiveness
Continuous Improvement
Safety/Security
Dignity/Respect

# Testing & Revising

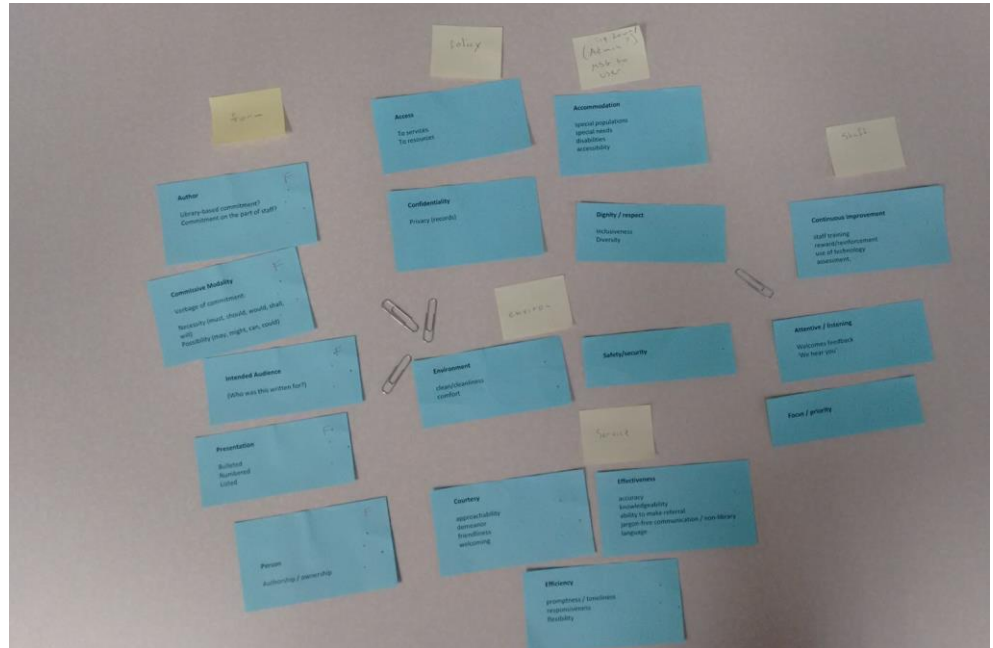
Pilot coding to test the coding frame and identify issues using 2 of the 8 statements

<b>Concept-Driven Subcategories</b>	<b>Data-Driven Subcategories</b>
Courtesy	Focus/Priority
Efficiency	Environment
Effectiveness	Accomodation
Continuous Improvement	Confidentiality
Safety/Security	Access
Dignity/Respect	Attentive/Listening

# Analysis

Three techniques provided different arrangements for viewing the data:

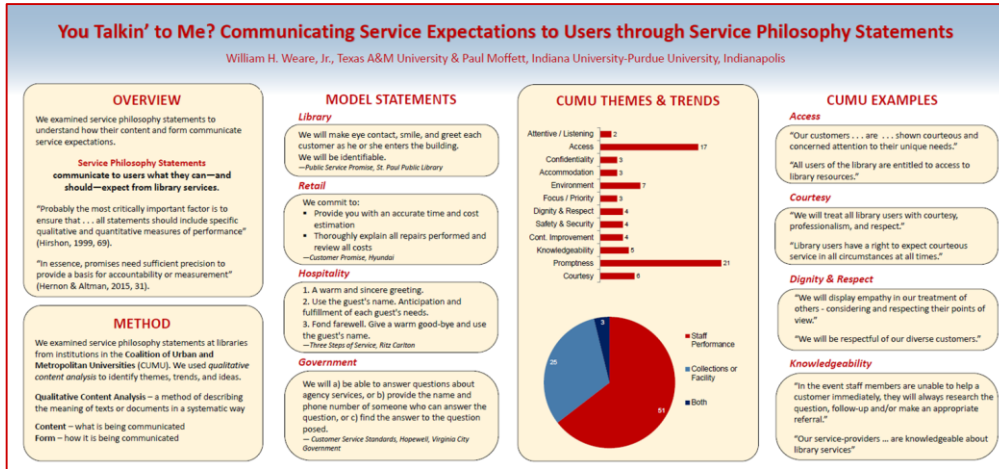
- Spreadsheet
- Cards
- Alternative grouping



# Communicating Findings

Poster: Quantitative representation

Article: Narrative of qualitative findings



## Service Philosophy Statements in Academic Libraries: A Qualitative Content Analysis

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*Some academic libraries use service philosophy statements to strengthen the quality of their service culture. A service philosophy statement communicates directly to users what they can—and should—expect from the library. This article describes a study in which the authors applied qualitative content analysis to service philosophy statements. The objective was to examine the form and content of these statements and identify themes, trends, and ideas in order to determine how and what they communicate about a library's commitment to service. The results of the study found that statements in the sample varied significantly in strength and purpose.*

**KEYWORDS** academic libraries, content analysis, customer service, public services, service philosophy

# Challenges

- No prior experience with segmentation, coding, qualitative content analysis
- No prior study or analysis of service philosophy statements
- Numerous variables within the structure and content of the documents

# Thank you

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