

Forbes Library Customer Service Survey Results

In March 2006, a comprehensive survey was conducted as part of the library's long range planning process. That survey was distributed in the library as well as in the community and over the phone via random cold calling yielding 661 completed surveys. In August of 2008, a shortened version of the survey was distributed in the library for a period of a month and yielded 425 responses. This survey was conducted at the completion of a year long grant funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and distributed by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners focusing on improving customer service at the library. The goal of this survey was to ascertain patron sentiments about customer service compared to the results of the earlier pre-grant survey.

Key:

Italics denote questions that had comments as answers

Bold indicates the top answers for each question

1. How often do you use the library? (check one)

	Percentage 2006	Percentage 2008
At least once a week	38.8%	54%
At least once a month	36.2%	39%
At least once a year	20%	6%
Never	5%	1%

2. If you do not use Forbes Library, please tell us why: (check all that apply)

	Percentage 2006	Percentage 2008
Not applicable. I use the library as often as I need.	Not asked	71%
Do not have a library card	17.1%	Not asked
Library is too far away	12.9%	4%
Hours are not convenient	21.8%	20%
Do not know where the library is located	1.8%	Not asked
Transportation needs	12.4%	Not asked
Library location is not convenient	Not asked	4%
Library does not have what I am looking for	15.3%	4%
I use other libraries	32.9%	12%
Not enough computers	7.6%	1%
Need help with English	2.9%	0%
Physical disability	2.4%	1%
Staff is not helpful	14.1%	1%
Library is too noisy for me	2.9%	1%
Inconvenient access from parking lot	11.8%	< 1%
Experience is not satisfying	Not asked	< 1%
<i>Other (please specify)</i>	51.2%	6%

3. How would you rate the staff in the following areas?

	Excellent 2006	Excellent 2008	Good 2006	Good 2008	Neutral 2006	Neutral 2008	Fair 2006	Fair 2008	Poor 2006	Poor 2008
Knowledgeable	48%	74%	40%	18%	9%	2%	2%	<1%	1% (8)	<1%
Friendly and Courteous	41%	80%	34%	16%	13%	4%	6%	1%	7% (40)	<1%
Available when needed	32%	65%	40%	24%	16%	2%	9%	1%	3% (20)	1%
Adequate assistance by phone	27%	51%	31%	13%	35%	10%	4%	1%	3% (19)	0%
Adequate assistance by email	22%	42%	20%	11%	50%	9%	5%	0%	3% (15)	0%
Overall quality of staff service	40%	73%	39%	16%	11%	2%	6%	1%	5% (27)	0%

4. What do you like best about Forbes Library?

In 2006, the top five responses in order were the **building, atmosphere, staff, collections** and **Arts & Music Department**. In 2008, the top five responses in order were **collections, building, Arts & Music, staff** and **inter-library loan**.

5. What frustrates you, if anything, about the Library?

In 2006, the top five responses in order were **hours, trouble finding items, parking, staff attitudes**, and **interior building complaints** (shelving, seating, etc). In 2008, the top five responses in order were **hours, collections, staff, noise** and **parking** although the overall number of people citing frustrations was down significantly from 2006. In 2006, 44% of respondents cited one or more frustration. In 2008, only 16% of respondents cited one or more frustration.

6. What would you like to tell us that we have not already asked?

This question yielded a variety of responses as it did in 2006. Some comments were specific issues requests for the library to review. However, the majority of responses were very kind compliments and words of thanks for the library and its services.

I get here as often as I can because it is such an enjoyable place to be! Thanks!

I feel that staff helpfulness, courtesy and warmth have improved over the past several years. If this was planned, you're doing a great job and have the right people interacting with patrons.

...my world would be much smaller and life less interesting without all the benefits I receive as a Forbes patron. Thank you.