



# Improving Chat Reference with Emotional Intelligence

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LINDSEY WHARTON, EXTENDED CAMPUS & DISTANCE SERVICES LIBRARIAN

EMILY MANN, REFERENCE & INFORMATION SERVICES LIBRARIAN

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

# Outline

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- FSU Stats
- Basics to Remember
- Introduction to Emotional Intelligence
- Emotional Intelligence in Virtual Reference
- Emotional Intelligence Exercises
- Rethinking Best Practices
- Implementing Training Program
- Conclusion



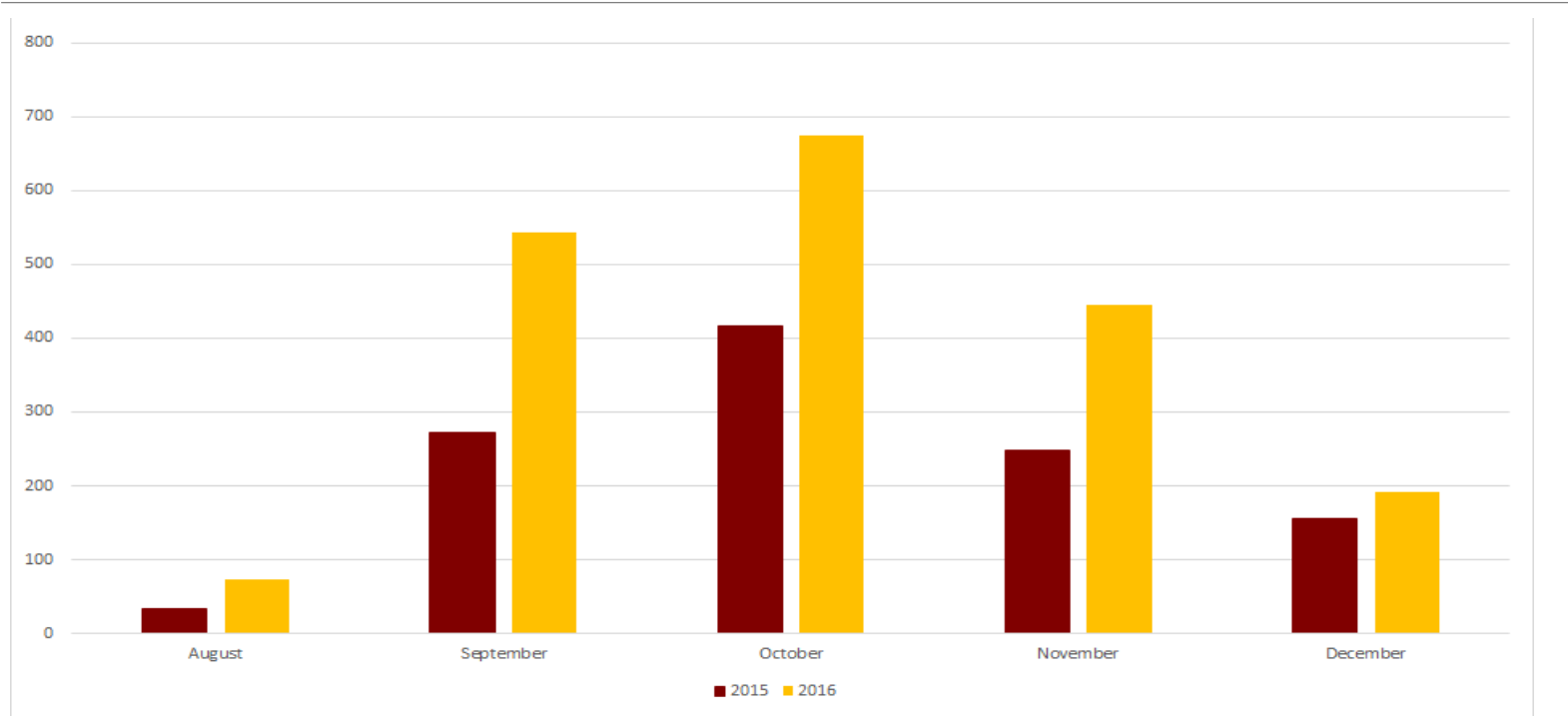
# FSU Ask A Librarian Overview

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- Staffed 24 hours a day, 5 days a week during academic year
- Over 40 librarians, staff, or graduate assistants participate
- Took over coordination in 2014
- Specialized desks for interlibrary loan and material delivery service



# Fall 2015 & Fall 2016 Comparison



# Basics to Remember

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- Greeting & Follow-Up
- Think of each interaction as a reference interview
- Principles of customer service
- Don't forget your tone
- Give your full attention



# Discussion

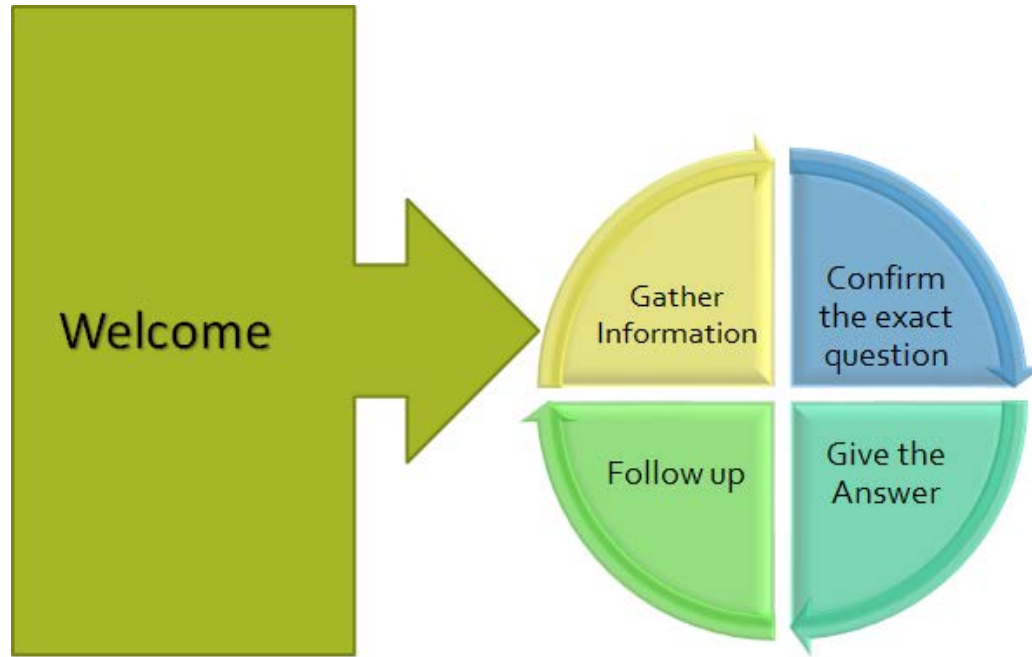
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Do you think you can improve your virtual reference skills?

How?

# Reference Interview

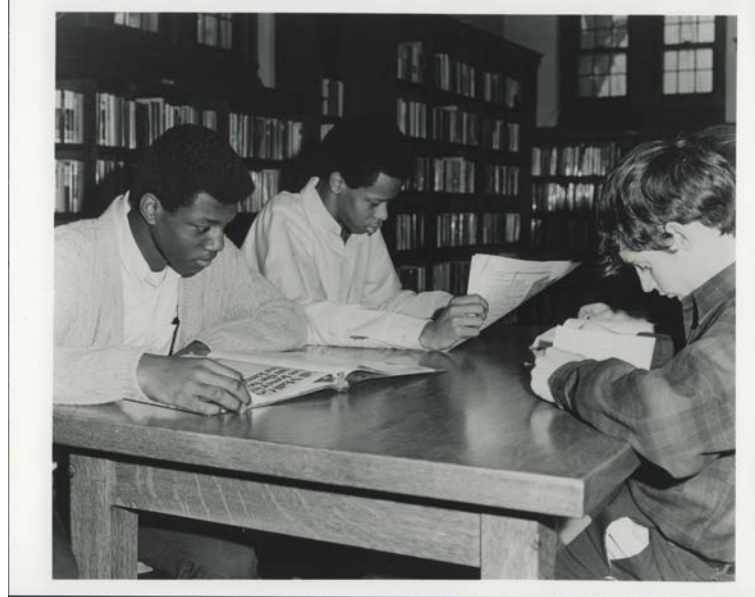
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# RUSA Guidelines

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- Approachability
- Interest
- Listening/Inquiring
- Searching
- Follow-up





# Introduction to Emotional Intelligence

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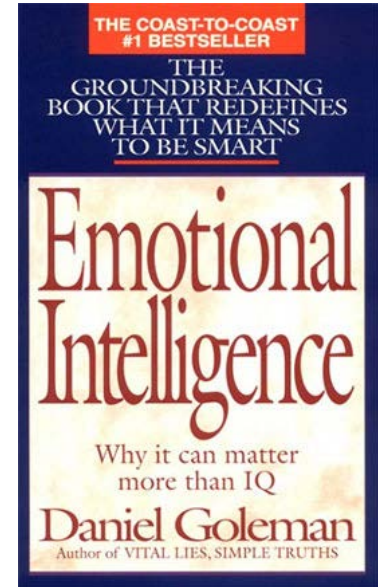
- Emotional Intelligence is a model used explain individual differences in people's ability to use emotion-related information to enhance thinking and problem solving
- Rather than thinking about logic vs. emotion, emotional intelligence lets us think about the logic of emotion



# More about Emotional Intelligence

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- Several models including ability model (original model by Mayer and Salovey) and mixed models which also include personality traits like optimism, calm, flexible
- Was first widely accepted by popular psychology due to bestselling book by Daniel Goleman, however becoming more of a scientific concept now
- Still a relatively new concept as its less than 30 years old



# Mayr and Salovey Ability Model

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Tools	Skills
<i>Perceiving Emotion</i>	Ability to identify, distinguish, and express emotions
<i>Using Emotion</i>	Ability to generate emotions in oneself and in others, resulting in different cognitive states
<i>Understanding Emotion</i>	Knowledge of emotions as well as the ability to predict how one's emotional state will evolve as a situation changes
<i>Managing Emotion</i>	Ability to regulate one's own and others' emotions

# Questions for Emotional Intelligence

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- Do the abilities just describe personality traits?
- How can you measure abilities?
- Can emotional intelligence be taught?
- Ability (can be taught) vs. Personality trait (ingrained, can't be taught)
- Can these abilities be used in a virtual setting?



# Discussion

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Do you feel that you have a high or low EQ?

Do you think this is something that you can learn?

# Engaging Users Through Emotional Intelligence

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- How our users feel during reference interactions determines how they feel about the library
- Empathize with the emotion but don't try to analyze it
- EQ requires self awareness and self care
- Emotions alter our cognitive process, when we are aware of our emotions and those around us we increase our cognitive skills
- Some studies indicate that cognitive processes can modify our mood or emotion (Guterman, Kliefeld, Vegmister)



# Advantage of Emotional Intelligence

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- Promotes creative and flexible thinking
- Able to understand complex questions
- When people are involved, emotions are involved
  - Using EQ in VR means a better experience for both patrons and practitioners
- Being self-aware of emotions will help you be aware of how you might be perceived
- Helps you to communicate more fully

# Discussion

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What emotions do you assume your patrons are feeling?

What leads you to this assumption?

How can you address these emotions in a positive manner through virtual reference?



# Connecting EQ to Rusa Guidelines

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## RUSA Guidelines

- Approachability
- Interest
- Listening/Inquiring
- Searching
- Follow-up

## Emotional Abilities

- Perceive emotion
- Use emotion
- Understand emotion
- Manage emotion

# Discussion

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After thinking about emotional intelligence and virtual reference, do you see a connection?

Why or why not?

How would you approach the following statements with emotional intelligence?



“Why do you need to know if this is for a class?”

“Are you single? I’m lonely.”

“I’m not sure about my topic,  
what do you think I should do?”

# Rethinking Best Practices

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- Use less canned chats
- Listening & empathy
- Pick up questions in 25 seconds or less
- Take patrons from where they've been searching (the known) to better sources (the unknown)
- Get to know your patron, especially in terms of their searching expertise

# Implementing a VR Training Program

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- Flipped classroom
- In-person and online
- “Emotional Intelligence” by name
- Assessment
- Virtual reference requires multilayered skillset: reference, technology, customer service, communication





# Final Discussion

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- As our numbers continue to rise, we must continue to improve our service and support the diverse needs of our patrons
- Recognize and enhance your EQ
- Always practice empathy



# Works Cited

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# Questions?

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Lindsey Wharton: [lwharton@fsu.edu](mailto:lwharton@fsu.edu)

Emily Mann: [emann@fsu.edu](mailto:emann@fsu.edu)