Entering ALEPH: The Power of One

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The power and influence of one person in any aspect of ALEPH conversion is considerable. Within a conversion group each person who contributes a level of expertise with a positive attitude can enable the group to solve implementation problems. Discussion and group activity encourage positive communication in a collaborative way.
Inspiration for Presentation

- Lynda Juall Carpenito-Moyet, RN, MS, CRNP
- **The Power of One Nurse** [editorial]
- Describes scenarios in which a nurse can seize the opportunity to make a positive difference in another person’s life.
AGENDA

- Describe Health Sciences Library setting
- Set the context for Aleph conversion
- Review the lessons learned
- Do a group activity
- Present recommendations
- Sum up
The Health Sciences Library

- Independent Library reporting to VP for Health Sciences
- Separate main campus Melville Library with branch libraries
- Using Sirsi’s *Unicorn Integrated Library Management System*
- Combined Library of Congress & National Library of Medicine call numbers and subject headings
- Citrix MetaFrame Access Suite environment ([www.citrix.com](http://www.citrix.com))
  - ICA (Independent Computing Architecture) Client/MetaFrame Presentation Server
Implementation Context

- State University of New York (SUNY) + 32 Community Colleges = 64 campuses
- SUNY Connect is the SUNY-wide electronic library initiative
- SUNY Connect plan – implement via clusters
  - Group 3 cluster
  - Projected January 2003 STP (switch to production)
- Ex Libris’s first Sirsi Unicorn conversion
- Citrix architecture unique
Our Aleph Implementation

- Implementing Aleph version 14.2.4
- Library’s Implementation Team
  - Head of Systems
  - Systems Administrator for Sirsi/Aleph
  - Head of Circulation/Reserve/ILL
  - Head of Serials/Cataloging/Acquisitions
- External Team Members
  - Ex Libris Project Manager
  - SUNY Office of Library & Information Services (OLIS) Project Manager
Challenges

- First Ex Libris conversion from Sirsi
- First Ex Libris encounter with Citrix
- Diacritics problem during data load delayed STP two months
- Coordination
- “Aleph speak”
- Fear of change
- Oracle tables
- Documentation in transition
- Overburdened project manager
Overwhelming Odds

- Conversion seemed impossible
- Intimidated by volume of work
- Challenged by internal & external pressures
- What's a person to do?
How can one person influence process or outcome?

- Attitude
- Behavior
- Commitment
- Inclusion / empowerment
Attitude

- Be positive
  - Avoid denial, downplay the negative
- Be confident
  - Trust in the collective abilities of the staff
- Be flexible
  - No plan is perfect
- Accept that change is good
  - Enjoy the adventure
Behavior

- Take charge
- Act constructively
- Focus
  - Have 1 team member concentrate on the “big picture”
  - Delegate area to each team member
- Keep a log
- Change negatives to positives
Commitment

- Face reality
  - All else in life does not stop when conversion starts
  - The library will continue to run

- Drive the conversion
  - Set own goals and timelines
  - Stick to the plan as much as possible

- Be persistent
  - Ask until you get a clear answer
  - Use the discipline of training
Inclusion / Empowerment

- Communicate two directions
  - Get input
  - Provide progress reports
- Share knowledge
- Work with relevant staff on each unit
- Motivate
  - Use praise
  - Celebrate accomplishments, small or large
Lessons Learned

- Planning is essential
- Acting confident inspires confidence
- Persistence pays off
- Log keeper is keystone
  - Keeps team on track, matrix up-to-date
  - “Translates” from Project Manager
- Conversion is a bonding experience
  - Everyone does contribute in her/his own way
- Good humor reduces the stress
Group activity

- Use scenarios to propose different avenues of approach
- Reduce common problems to size
- How this works
  - Divide in groups
  - Determine a positive & a negative response to scenario, using editorial for guidance
  - Report back
Recommendations

- Communicate
  - Use discussion lists
  - Network with other sites
  - Talk with co-workers

- Be proactive
  - Anticipate
  - Prepare
  - Document

- Celebrate
  - Compliment achievements, milestones reached
  - Congratulate yourselves
  - Have a ceremony, visible symbol of conclusion
Summary

- Each person can influence the nature of the implementation
- Keep a positive attitude
- Behave in a focused manner
- Commit to the conversion
- Empower each other
- Put the implementation in perspective
Merci

THANK YOU