Key steps to building relationships with academic colleagues

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1. Books are for use

- ‘The very life of a library is in the *personal service* given to the people.’[1]
- **Advocates** for the value and quality of the learning and knowledge resources of the university
- Need to understand service context and how to develop and enhance provision

2. Every reader his/her book

"Don't forget the hassle of dealing with mad academics with single-track minds and tunnel vision."

"You provide a nuanced service to the faculties."

"Empathy with subject area is important - i.e. defending subject needs."

3. Every book its reader

"…An understanding by the subject librarian not to just accept all orders from one or two colleagues in specific areas."

- Awareness of service and resource usage and what that means to academic colleagues
- Strategies and improvement plans need to be articulated at different levels
  - subject, faculty, university…

4. Save the time of the reader

"The library is one of the few university services that is actually that – a brilliant service to actually support academics. [Library staff] take responsibility for their roles rather than delegating everything back…The staff are positive and enthusiastic and don't begrudge ever being asked for help."

5. The library is a growing organism

- "[I expect my library service to provide] academic and study skill support for students; expert advice and input into programmes."
- "When I came here, I was very surprised by the library service; it was very different from the one I was used to at X. But I like it, it's better."
- 'The vital principle of the library…is that it is an instrument of universal education, and assembles together and freely distributes all the tools of education and disseminates knowledge with their aid.[2]'

Reference, endnotes and acknowledgements

S.R Ranganathan, *The five laws of library science*, Madras: London : The Madras Library Association; E. Goldston, 1931.

1. Ranganathan, p. 67
2. Ranganathan, p. 415

- With thanks to anonymized academic colleagues for their comments and thoughts