

Title

Team-building in the Time of COVID: A Zoom Play

Abstract

This play brings to life the story of a group of professional and para-professional staff at York University Libraries as they build a new team and provide new services during a year-long COVID-19 lockdown. Creative use of technologies help them develop a sense of community and a renewed sense of purpose.

Summary

In a strange and scary time, exiled from their place of work, a group of (relative) strangers turn a wellbeing exercise into so much more. Picture this: a threat invisible to the naked eye empties out an entire 60, 000-person campus; the library locks its door with an hour's notice; and the people who like to help are sent home indefinitely. How are they, the library people, going to survive, thrive and help the faculty and students now dispersed to the four corners of the world? This short play will tell you how.

The pandemic shut down the old ways of communicating, BUT library services still had to be available. The professional and para-professional staff in the library overcame personal, technical and other challenges to build a new team that would serve its public. BUT team building requires communication and trust. How was trust in the new team built in an online environment known for its comical awkwardness? The limitations of Zoom were turned into a strength: week by week, turn by turn, everyone got to speak and truly listen to their team members. The common launching off point was a carefully selected video on skills building, library services, accessibility and diversity. Video by video, varied insights meant that team members were visible to each other as fellow humans and co-workers! A team was born. Learn what each player in this team did to make it come alive. Come by and watch: Team-building in the Time of COVID: A Play