enthusiastic...good customer service

skills...multitasking abilities...able to
troubleshoot technical problems...
extcellent reference skills...knowledge of
Web resources...experience with
chat...commitment to information
literacy...motivated to improve skills

What skills will your staff need to provide this new service?

Will you use librarians to staff your chat reference “desk”? Trained
paraprofessionals or library school students?

Will you use current staff or recruit new staff?

As you make decisions about staffing your chat reference service, take a
look at the core competencies for virtual reference developed by the
Washington Statewide Virtual Reference Project. These can guide you in
determining the knowledge, skills and abilities that you are seeking.

Practical advice for recruiting, selecting, and training staff for chat reference
can be found in these books:

Starting and Operating Live Virtual Reference Services by Marc Meola and
Stan Stormont (Neal-Schuman, 2002), especially pages 79-89.

Going Live: Starting and Running a Virtual Reference Service by Steve
Coffman (ALA, 2003), especially pages 35-41 and 53-63.

Ronan (Libraries Unlimited, 2003, especially pages 79-107.)