



enthusiastic...good customer service skills...multitasking abilities...able to troubleshoot technical problems... excellent reference skills...knowledge of Web resources...experience with chat...commitment to information literacy...motivated to improve skills

STAFFING YOUR NEW SERVICE

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.

Chat Reference: A Guide to Live Virtual Reference Services by Jana Smith Ronan (Libraries Unlimited, 2003, especially pages 79-107.