

- How are you maintaining staff morale in these uncertain times?
- How are you coping and how do they help those around you cope?
- How are you mentally preparing for the crisis in the weeks and months ahead?
- What are your thoughts about a pandemic that lasts well into 2021?

Dominic: Buying staff lunch once a month, getting t-shirts with logos from a local place for staff to wear all year round.

I have good days and bad days. Things were a bit rough in May; birthdays happening and hasn't seen family since Christmas. Mentally coping and trying to be positive. Trying to get outside and go biking has helped. The current processes are good and we will keep on with hours and what is going on until it goes away or everyone wears masks. Staff are now into a routine and things aren't changing on them quite as fast as they used to.

Brandon: Staff Morale-We talk over every idea or activity we want to do then see how we do it safely and keep or patrons interested in the library. We take things one week at a time.

Erica (Three Lakes): Staff there all the time and they can have face to face meetings once a week. That has been HUGE for staff morale. Energy is high in the morning and gets exhausting by the end of the week. Three days are plenty. Procedures are different: all coming through the door, get a number, a greeter, and an exit time. We can't turn our backs on people entering. Some staff can't be on the desk due to being high risk. People have been really good - not dealing with difficult people. Just more hands on. Still debating the number of hours, winters slow way down. I'm debating adding hours, but if we are slower, do we need more hours? We mentally prepare by sticking to what is working. Worried about access to wi-fi; repair dates are lagging. Bad storms not helping. Not enough ports to get new wi-fi. What happens in the fall when people can't sit outside?

Anne: I've been trying myself to remain positive and upbeat, and keeping my staff up to date on all incoming information. I've been trying to have a weekly Friday update on what will be coming in the next week. Personally I'm doing okay-ish, not great, but I've always had anxiety, so there's nothing I haven't dealt with before. I foresee us going into the next year similarly.

Erica (Medford): Opened last week, M-Thurs, and people are super appreciative of that. Taking things week to week. Stress is better because kids can't be in the library (under 16) without an adult. Thinking about taking one week at a time because of changes.

Janay: Being a new director, I am still trying to "get to know" my staff better. Kathy and I are here pretty much everyday together and I am so thankful for her and her expertise and advice! We are doing fine staying positive. Our patrons are all great and happy we are open so that helps when our spirits get down! We are good at taking one day at a time!

Katie: Was a teacher for 7 years, and now has a career change. She is happy to be at the library. Morale-wise: things are good. Staff are good at keeping things positive. Has done a lot of remote learning, so remote learning is comfortable to her. I really want to do some clubs and events and really want people

in the meeting room. Happy that training is happening.

Kay: Terrified of school opening and terrified if it doesn't. They are staffed one person at a time, but having a hard time getting back into work.

Laurie: Morale is good right now. We have a chocolate dish and provide lots of it. We have meetings with staff when we see the need for it. We stress them taking time for themselves. We take burn out into account, and staff struggle with not being "busy busy." Needs to work on taking more time for herself. Stay hydrated. Try to keep people upbeat and communication open. Still making face masks. I'm getting in the mindset that the "normal" we had will not be that way for awhile.

Peggy: Things are going pretty good. Sensing some level of exhaustion. Really trying to keep the visits to 30 minutes is almost impossible for patrons. It's mentally draining explaining why they can only stay for 30 minutes. They are a little stressed with the hours, and they will discuss at the next meeting. They do lunch together as a staff on Friday, which is nice. They catch up on things and they have time to have staff meetings. This is new, and staff appreciate that. Worried about programming and things in the months ahead. It's hard to keep saying no.

Teresa: Things are going fairly well. She makes sure that everyone's outside lives get taken care of (vacation day, go somewhere, work around that). Home life needs to be a priority. When we do gather in the library, we talk about what is going on, professionally and personally (get things off our chest). Staff can't be together consistently, which is a stressor for me. We are better as a group, and I miss that. When we can get together, we cram conversations in a short period of time. Board agreed that August should look like June and July; we decided that safety measures in place are adequate. Looking into 5-day-a-week service seems exhausting.

Heidi: We have our good days and our bad. Listening is key. Communication is the hardest thing, and the easiest thing. Hard thinking of normal vs. now. The positive things are having staff meetings, if you can. Make sure to meditate and breathe under your mask, so you can stay calm.

Virginia: Things appear to be going well. Have had some blips and things going on. Doing a lot to make sure people are "ok." Staff sometimes need a day off. Some days mental exhaustion is high. It hits me that I'm responsible for them and their families. Communication is key with people. Staff eat on Fridays without her, so they can talk. We're finding a balance, but it's not perfect. We are balancing curbside with having the building open. Numbers are climbing in the county, so it's a concern.

Jenny: My own productivity is down (agree with Kay); schedules are different. I feel myself saying "I should've gotten more done." It's a weird time, and I take things one week at a time.