MERCHANDISING 101: OVERVIEW

WHAT
Merchandising encourages the use of library materials through attractive visual display. It’s a different approach to displaying library collections:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library Shelving</th>
<th>Merchandising</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantity</td>
<td>Many as attractive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection</td>
<td>Highlighted collections</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approach</td>
<td>Organic: Spine/cover</td>
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<td>Encourages</td>
<td>Browsing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal</td>
<td>Attractive &amp; orderly</td>
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</table>

WHY
Merchandising of collections supports our Library Strategic Plan (see www.mtlaurel.lib.nj.us/plan.pdf)

**Our Mission:**
The Mount Laurel Library provides a real and virtual center where residents gather as a community for learning, for leisure, for life.

**Goal One: The Library Experience**
Mount Laurel Library users will encounter welcoming, flexible and inviting library space and customer-focused staff that support the library’s service program and meet community needs.

WHO/WHEN/WHERE
Who: Every one
When: Every day (Minimum: 30 minutes per full-time staff per day, part-timers adjust accordingly)

- Do it as your work day begins
- Divide into several shorter segments
- Merchandise when you don’t have time to start a new task
- Do it as a break in your work
- Merchandise as you walk from here to there in the library
- Merchandise at the end of your workday

Where: Start in one area, then move on. Choose different areas …it helps us learn the collection.

HOW
The key to successful merchandising is to keep displays looking full

- 15 books per shelf (minimum)
- Mix of spine and cover out
- No empty slat wall

1. **Tidy First**
   - Put books in order (it may be easier to do this all spine out)
   - Distribute evenly on shelves

2. **Turn covers out**
   - Use attractive and colorful covers
   - Find a balance, for example: 4 spine out to 1 cover out
   - Be sensitive to showing a variety of cultures, genres, viewpoints

3. **Fill in gaps on slat wall**

Gondola Merchandising 1-2-3’s

This material was developed during the 2003-2004 Trading Spaces: Merchandising the Collection joint project funded by the New Jersey State Library, the South Jersey Regional Library Cooperative and Mount Laurel Library. For information see www.sjrlc.org/tradingspaces. This may be adapted by libraries for their own use, but not for publication without permission. © 2004, Mount Laurel Library, www.mtlaurel.lib.nj.us