

Excited about EQUIP!

Lynda Harrington

The Olympics are done for this year but our library team is still in competition! Our scoreboard is posted and individuals are tracking their progress as they study their playbook entitled EQUIP. There is no doubt who will win this game. It will be everyone — from the library team members to the patrons in our community!

How are they training to get the victory for Jesus in their library ministry? Each participant is asked to spend 10 to 15 minutes during her weekly schedule to read a section of the EQUIP assignments. Everything they need can be easily accessed online. However many have found it more user-friendly to have printed information which is now located in eight notebooks in our office. Post-it bookmark notes can be found in the front of the binders with a person's name and where they will continue studying when they work their next shift.

The exciting thing to see is our bar-graph chart beginning to look like a rainbow. As a section of EQUIP is completed, another square is filled-in under that person's name. A quick glance shows each individual's progress. For those who love a little rivalry, this incentive encourages further reading and action.

Our director and assistant director are almost as excited as cheerleaders about EQUIP. It is pointing everyone on our team in the same direction and telling us why we are going there. We are gaining vital knowledge for daily operation of the library. For those of who have been librarians for more than a few years, I am reminded of the Vince Lombardi quote, "Gentleman, this is a football." In other words, you must remember, review, and master the fundamental principles if you are looking for success in what you are doing.

Fifteen years ago, I was hired as director of our church library. Having only been a volunteer until that point and without a college education in library sciences, I began attending our Southern Baptist Convention and Tennessee Baptist Convention library conferences. Between their hands-on training and publication, our team was able to learn and harness their love for books into an organized ministry to share with our community.

Next year, I am ready to pass the baton to another. Once again we are going back to basics — this time with EQUIP. Those who have worked with us a while are learning the reasons why we "do the things we do". We are all learning where we have gaps that need filling, e.g., putting policies in writing rather than verbal transmission only. It really does give consistency and a final answer to everyone.

So, does your library team need a boost? Do they have the passion for serving our Lord in library ministry? They need one more thing to give them a winning edge. EQUIP your team with Equipping Church Librarians for Ministry.

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