

MOSS

it is awesome

Moss is terrific, it's great for... growing in the woods.. growing in your house... growing on the north [is it the north?] sides of trees. Better figure that out before heading out for a walk this evening.... I was going to talk about moss and then something happened.... and I changed my title [but kept my keynote theme]

Stupid rules
and how to change them.

Why manners are
simultaneously outmoded
and tired and also the best
way to get anything done.

mostly this is a good story about something that happened last week. If your experience with conflict resolution goes as far as "what I'm hearing you saying is you're frustrated with.... " and using people's names a lot, then you can't solve problems with smart people. They can psyche you out. They HATE that shit. You know how the best trick the devil ever played was convincing people he didn't exist? this is like that.... you want people to realize their own rules are stupid and change them for you.

October 28

This thread is no longer a question, but rather fodder for **name-dropping** [more inside]

posted by **hwyengr** to **etiquette/policy** at 5:34 PM - **89 comments** **69 new** +

1

My dearest and most cherished Angelenos, let us welcome our dear friend **Alnedra** to the land of swimming pools and movie stars. [more inside]

posted by **mandymanwasregistered** to **MetaFilter gatherings** at 3:04 PM - **5 comments** **3 new** +

The answers to **this question** have just been a horrible pile-on and it needs to stop. Seriously, 50+ answers saying essentially the same thing? Can we use some restraint here?

posted by **desjardins** to **etiquette/policy** at 1:48 PM - **109 comments** **6 new** +

2

Let's hook up in DC on Saturday night, 7-Nov. WHO'S WITH ME! [Cue Sound FX: Crickets.] [more inside]

posted by **ostranenie** to **MetaFilter gatherings** at 12:43 PM - **14 comments** **1 new** +

A **few recent threads** on MeTa have made me wonder, what's the stance on relationship filter questions in AskMe? [more inside]

posted by **battlebison** to **etiquette/policy** at 11:07 AM - **30 comments** **2 new** +

3

Am I the only person that feels like **this** and **this** are overly bloggy in tone? Not that I object to the content, it's just the personal/editorial framing. [more inside]

posted by **DU** to **etiquette/policy** at 10:12 AM - **38 comments** **1 new** +



I run a web community. For questions and answers. [explanation] For some people this means I'm a den mother, for some it means I'm a censor, for me it means I'm an online librarian [hence the disguise aspect] and generally it means I deal with 1) rules and 2) irritable people ... all day long. We have 1. complaints about name dropping 2. stop piling on the nice lady who told the cop she wouldn't use his pen. 3. omg I am tired of your relationship questions.

ARE YOU COMING TO BED?

I CAN'T. THIS IS IMPORTANT.

WHAT?

SOMEONE IS WRONG ON THE INTERNET.



I never knew there were so many irritable people in the world. In some ways this is great because I'm sort of irritable, so it's nice to be around people who feel like I do when people use the wrong its. That said, irritable people can be exhausting and demanding and at the same time, I've got half a decade of experience with them. I'd like to tell you what I've learned using something from last week as an example.

nsfw-ish



unless you work where I do

First off, you don't call people's rules stupid. My number one tip, and really the only one you need is to ask yourself "do you want to be right, or do you want to solve the problem?" BONUS: "Keeping in mind that you can't always do both." Many people opt for right. So, while there is a certain satisfaction to telling people they are dumb and wrong, this is rarely the solution to the original problem.



Also, people really don't like the "what I'm hearing you say..." stuff and they're not great with the "I'm sorry you got offended" sort of thing as a substitute for a real apology. Everyone's read the same self help books. They know you're gaming them, or trying to. The most useful trick in my whole arsenal of ways to get people to stop flipping out is to say I'm sorry and then shut up. Not "I'm sorry but...." This works in reverse, when maybe i'm the one with the stupid rule.....

this picture
is illegal.



I speak to the public a lot. I get to go to illustrious places like Elko NV. Last week I went to Des Moines Iowa. While I was there I checked out the public library (something we library geeks do). It's a new showcase library done by a fancy architect. I walked in with my camera and....

this
picture
breaks
the
rules



My friend apologized to me about putting her camera away so quickly implying we should have given them a harder time. We took photos anyhow, actually. But it was clear we had come up against a Stupid Rule... I took these photos in defiance of the rule. But I was nervous.

Des Moines Public Library

ADD NOTE SEND TO GROUP ADD TO SET BLOG THIS ALL SIZES ORDER PRINTS ROTATE EDIT PHOTO DELETE



"Are you taking pictures? Do not take pictures in here." the librarian said as soon as we walked into the library. I felt a little bad, but I took a few photos anyways.

Comments



Mike McCaffrey pro says:

Umm... aren't you allowed to take photos in public buildings? What reason could they have for you not to take photos?

But when I got back to the hotel, I put the photo on flickr, with a note about the rule.... and a lot of people commented, and a few people brought the conversation over to their blogs.... I wrote an email to the lady on the third floor in marketing and asked about the rule. used words like "visiting librarian" and "crestfallen"

librarian.net

putting the rar in librarian since 1999

leaving des moines

Posted in libraries | Edit | Friday, October 23rd, 2009 | 38 Comments » Trackback

Tags: desmoines, ilaria, iowa, iowa2009, photographs, photography, policies, policy, publiclibrary



note: new update from Des Moines PL and the architect's office below the fold. Short form: "it would be appropriate to change the policy"

I got a letter back from the library explaining that the fancy architect had wanted them to limit photography [commercial?] and that they were acceding to his wishes. I asked her if she minded if I put our exchange on my blog. She said no, something about "continuing the conversation" yay for cluetrain. The conversation was lively....

David Chipperfield



I could sort of see why he doesn't like pictures taken... he's a vampire! The real clincher was getting an email back from the architects saying that there had been some misunderstanding about what they had asked the library to do. See? Stupid!! I got a nice email back from the library saying two things 1. they were going to discuss the photography policy at the next meeting 2. they once again told me why their original policy was sound. I bit my tongue, wanting to solve the problem, and I'd have to secretly know I was right.

- The enforcer != the rulemaker
- No one cares about you
- Don't be afraid to ask why
- Have a (polite) posse
- Choose your battles



So I learned a few things, and I think they move beyond “So, James, what I’m hearing you saying is...”

most of all

- assume everyone just came from the dentist
- don't be in a hurry



These are actually the two guidelines I use the most.



With great power comes great responsibility



"First they ignore you, then they ridicule you, then they fight you, then you win."

MOSS

still awesome

thanks!

