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Using Secret Shoppers to Train Student Workers

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TRAINING STUDENT WORKERS WHO HAVE BEEN SHOPPED

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Sarah J. Hammill
FLA Conference 2013

The background of the slide is a dense field of question marks in various colors including white, blue, green, orange, pink, purple, yellow, and cyan. The question marks are scattered across the entire black background, creating a sense of inquiry and confusion.

What am I Talking About?

- 3 Rounds of Secret Shopping
- Student Training
- Changing Reference Service Models



Secret Shopping

- 3 Rounds
- Volunteers from campus
- \$5.00 Starbucks Card
- All library employees notified about program
- Assigned Questions /Likert-type questionnaire
- Face-to-face or telephone
- 23 volunteers



Secret Shopping Round 1

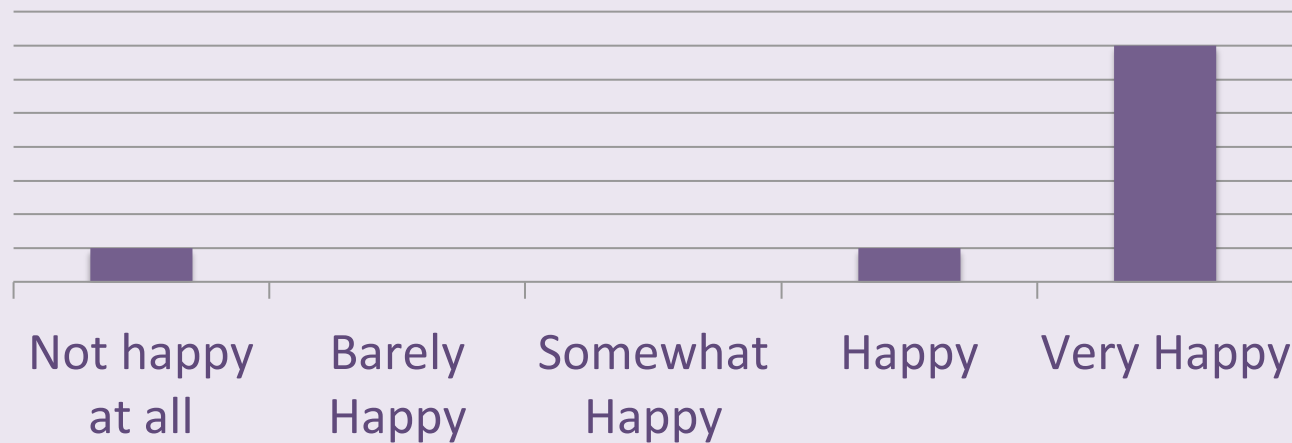
9 f2f shoppers

Self-perception of service

Focus on customer service

Secret Shopping Round 1 Findings

How would you describe your experience at the library service desk?



Bye Bye Reference Desk Staff



**Hello to more work for
work-study students!**



Secret Shopping Round 2

2 f2f, 6 calls

Referring ?s

Level of questions?

Focus on type of information received

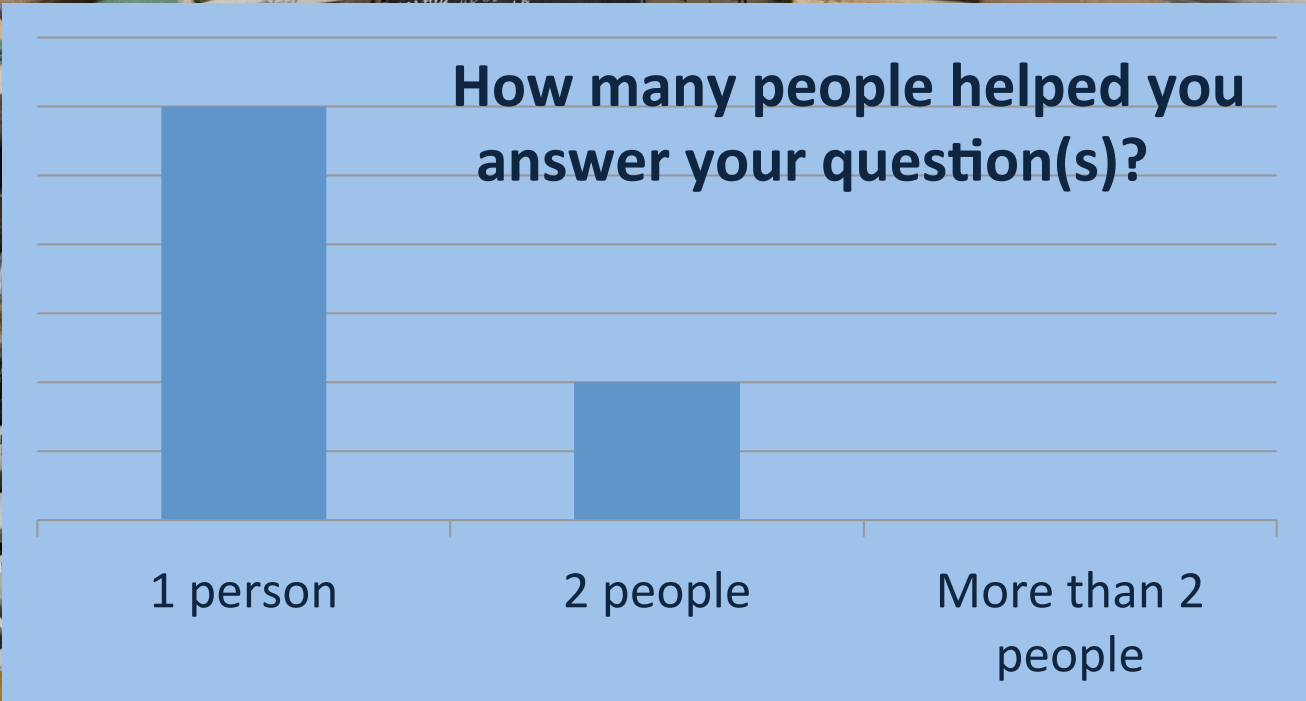
Secret Shopping Round 2 Results

How many people helped you answer your question(s)?

1 person

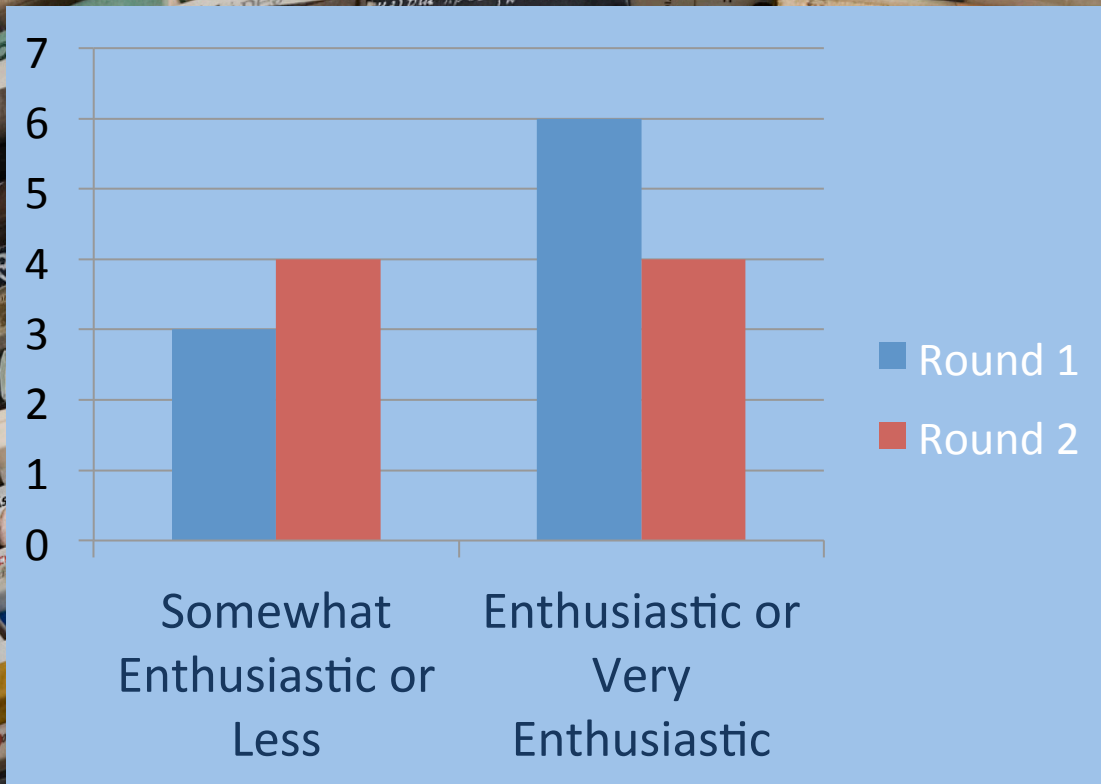
2 people

More than 2 people



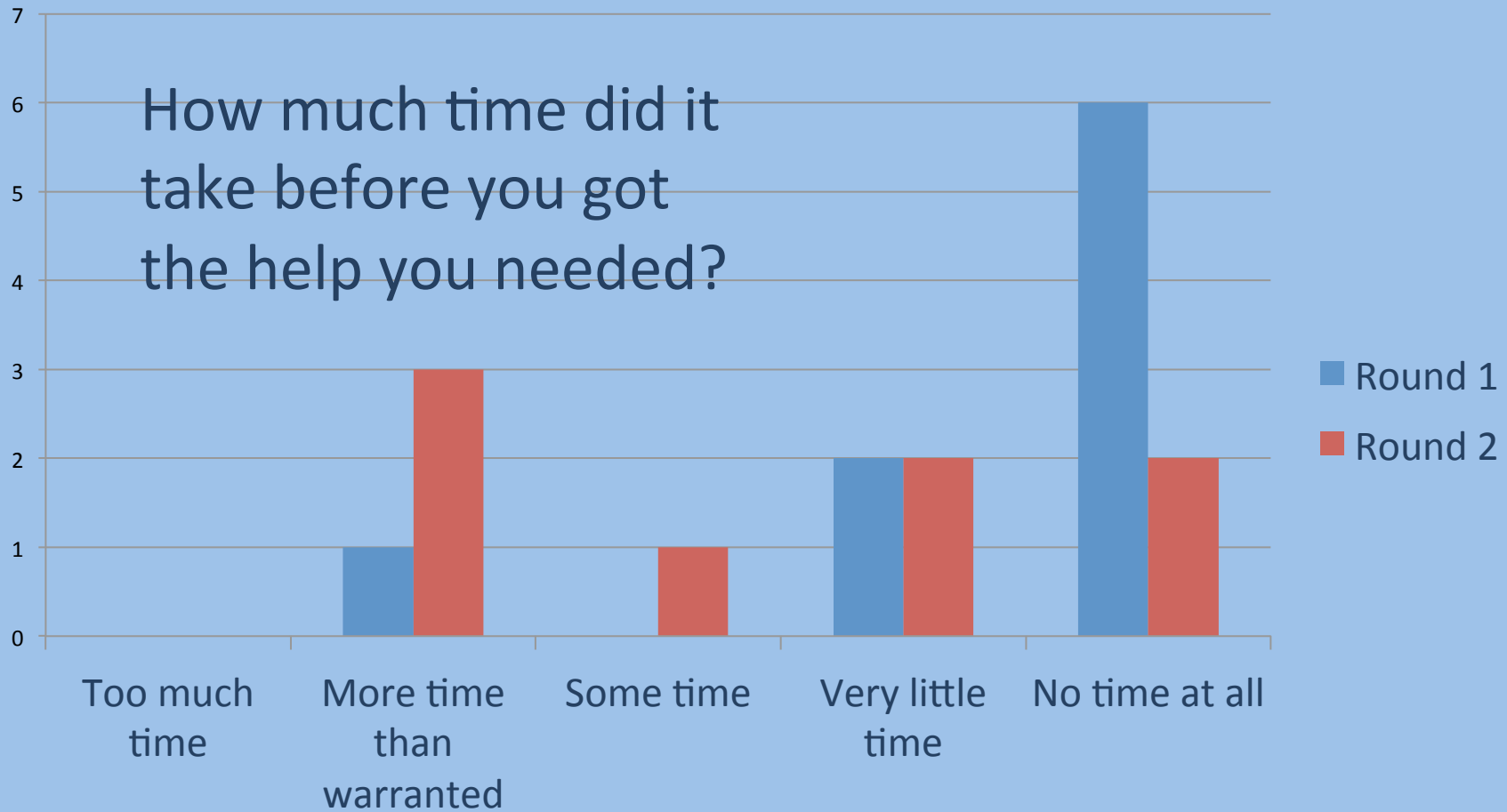
Secret Shopping Round 2 Results

Decline in Staff Enthusiasm



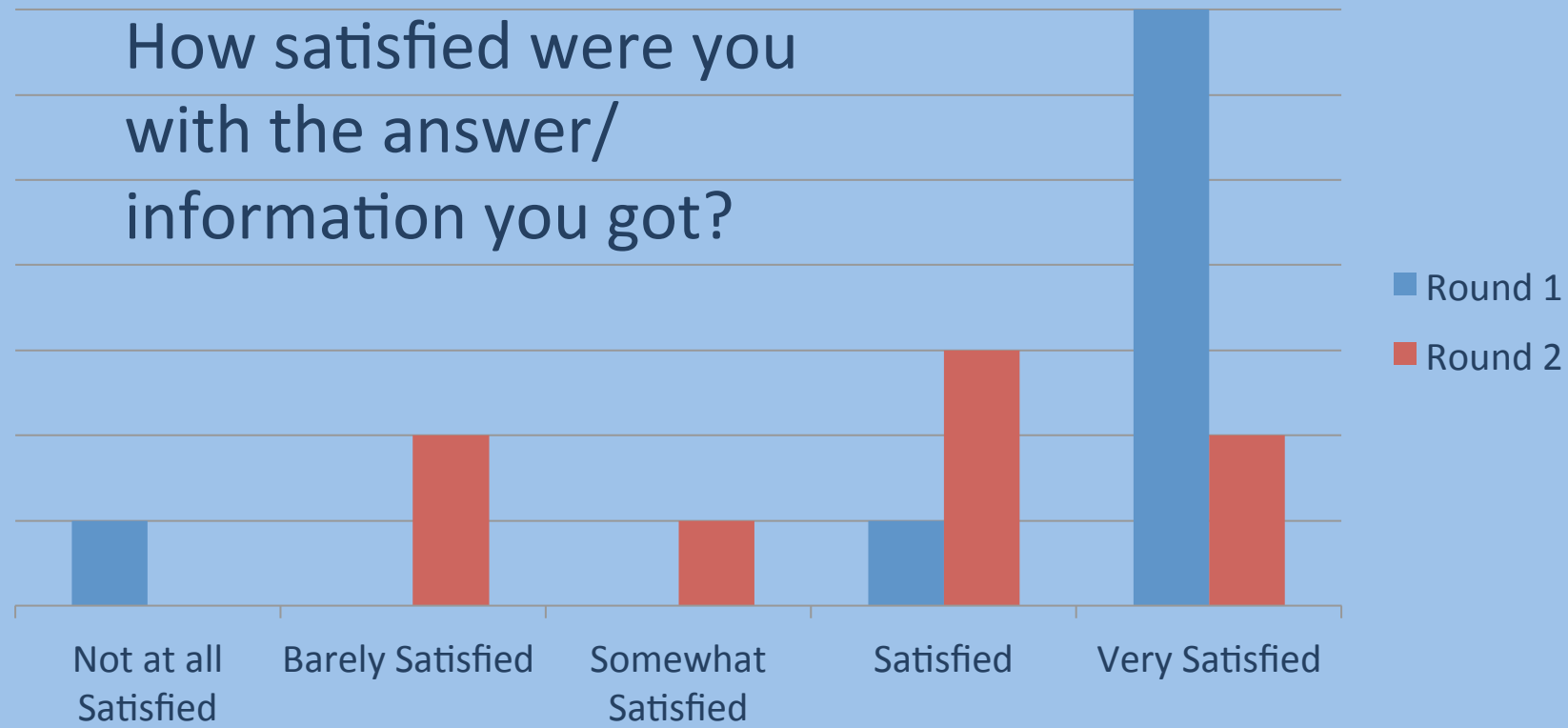
Secret Shopping Round 2 Results

How much time did it take before you got the help you needed?



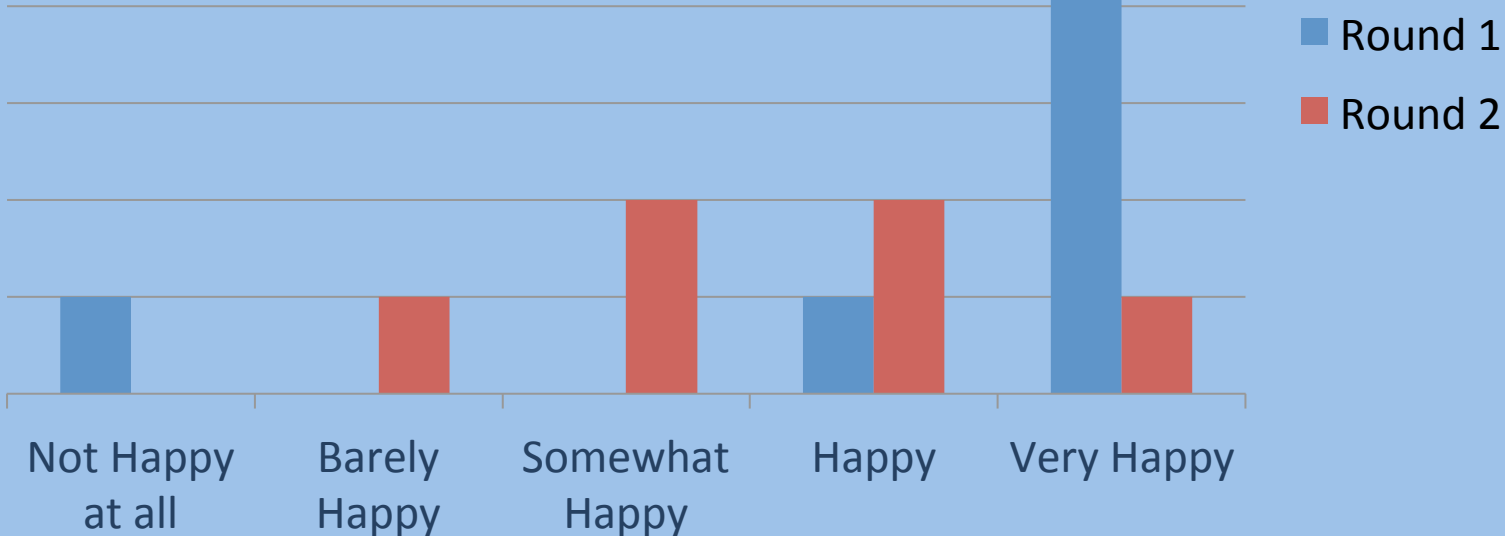
Secret Shopping Round 2 Results

How satisfied were you with the answer/information you got?



Secret Shopping Round 2 Results

How would you describe your experience at the library service desk?



Student Training Program

A young boy's face is the central focus, with a globe of small, colorful photographs pinned to his head. The background is a blurred, vibrant landscape with green hills and a blue sky.

Scenarios

Homework

Telephone
Etiquette

Role Playing

How to
Find Books

How to
Find
Articles

3-minute Rule

Information Literacy
& Critical Thinking

Assessments
Pre & Post

Secret Shopping Round 3

A photograph of a library aisle with tall bookshelves filled with books. In the foreground, a silver metal shopping cart with a blue handle is filled with various books. The cart is positioned in the aisle, and the books on the shelves are visible in the background.

5 f2f, 1 call

Focus on
quality & type
of information
received

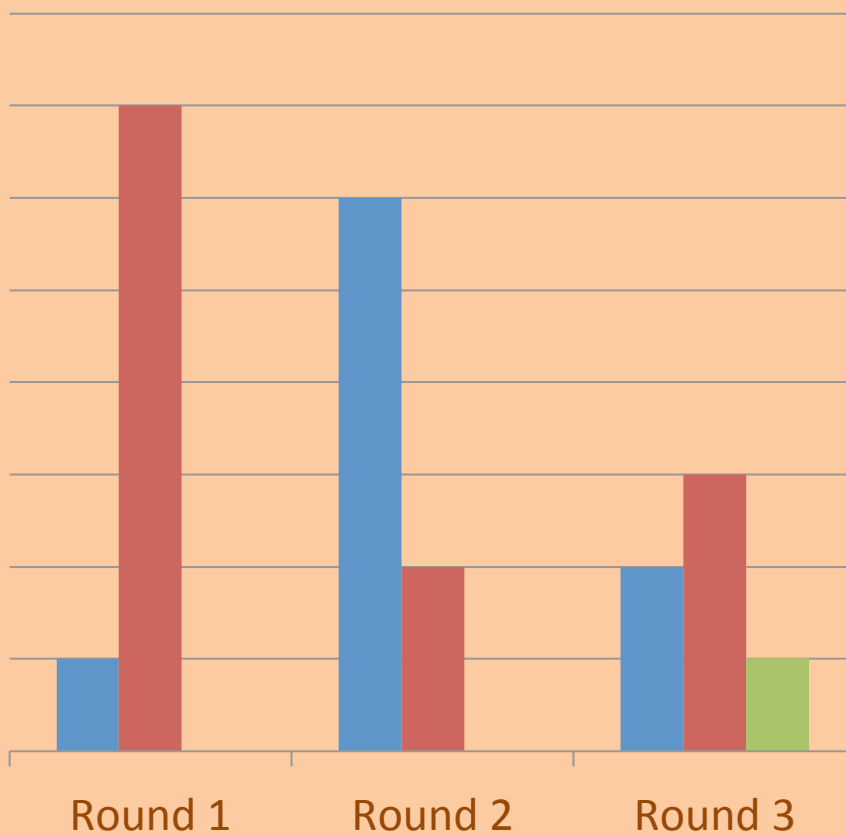
Referring ?s

Evaluation of student training
program

Secret Shopping Round 3 Results

Were you referred to another person for help with your question?

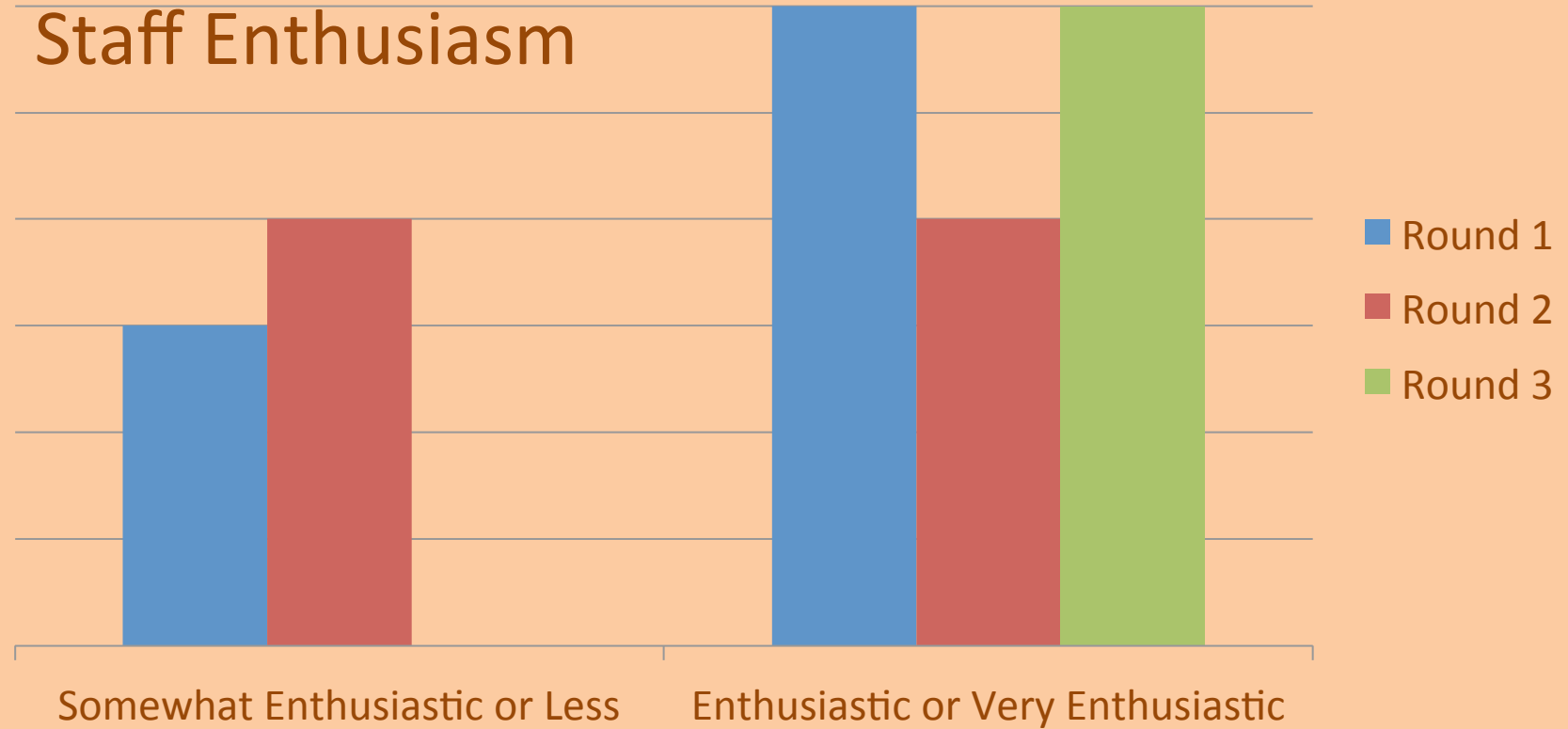
How many people helped you answer your question(s)?



- 1 person
- 2 people
- More than 2 people

Secret Shopping Round 3 Results

Staff Enthusiasm



Findings & Anecdotes

Gave high rankings on Likert but comments indicated otherwise

Highlighted the positive / Deemphasized Negative

“They did their best to help me even if they did not know the answer immediately.”

“All the information I obtained makes me wish I had to do a paper on *The Hilton*.”

Some Direct & Poignant Comments

“Poor experience. Staff member was not helpful.”

“Couldn’t really understand what he was saying.”

“A horrible experience”

“Employee needs to work on his phone etiquette.”



Findings & Conclusions

Training needs to expand to full-time employees

Telephone Etiquette

Seriously?

Seemingly easy questions have multiple layers

Unreasonable Expectations?

Welcome Back Reference Staff!



THANK YOU!!!

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS?
SUGGESTIONS?



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