



PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FIRM

A Books@Work Case Study

Books@Work brings professors into the workplace to build critical thinking and lifelong learning through the discussion of great literature.

The Program

A professional services firm located in Northeastern Ohio hosted Books@Work every other week for 8 months. A cross-hierarchical, cross-functional group read 4 books with 4 professors from local universities and colleges.

Program Outcomes & Participant Reflections

In interviews, participants appreciated the way Books@Work:

- increased participants' ability to **deal positively with diversity** in the workplace.
"You see a different side of a co-worker than you might have seen before. We all bring something different to the table regardless."
"It was nice to get the different generations, their ideas and experiences."
"Listening to others express their thoughts and ideas has enabled me to have a better understanding as to why people may see things differently than I [do]."
- improved participants' ability to **express differences of opinion**.
"It's hard to speak up in a meeting talking about business if you have a different idea or you disagree with an idea that's put forward. With Books@Work you can just naturally do that. Maybe the next time you're at a meeting, and a different idea is presented than you have or that you disagree with, you can say something because you are not unfamiliar with doing that."
- encouraged **respect for one another and self-confidence**.
"I experienced a renewed feeling of respect for my colleagues in our shared experience of expressing our thoughts and feelings."
"There were a few people who were shy at first but got more comfortable over time. I think once they got used to the idea, then you would notice that they would start to speak up more."
- created participant **connections and opportunities to communicate**.
"I think when you understand someone on a different level, you're able to work with them easier."
"It's less about the book that we're reading and more about the conversations that it engenders among the people who are there in the group."
- generated **sustainable impact**.
"Books live on. You remember them, you talk about them, you pass them on to other people. I certainly will be thankful for a popcorn ball and a cup of cider, but that's over and done with. You appreciate it for a second, where books you'll appreciate as long as you remember them."

Selected Seminar Readings

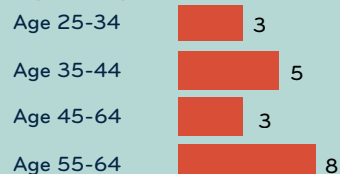
Truman Capote, *In Cold Blood*
Carson McCullers, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*
G.K. Chesterton, *The Man Who Was Thursday*
Drew Magary, *The Postmortal*

Demographic Information

Participants included clerical, human resources, information technology, paraprofessional and professional staff.

n=20

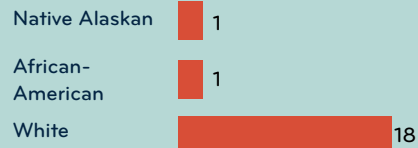
Age Ranges



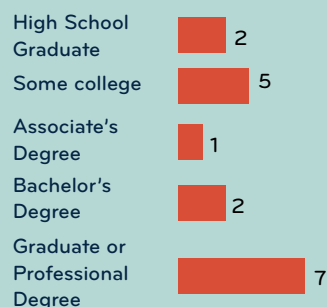
Gender



Race



Education



Survey Results

100%

- would recommend Books@Work to a friend
- would like to participate in Books@Work again
- found their Books@Work experience worthwhile

That Can Be Me, Inc.

www.booksatwork.org