Reference Service Assessment Form
(Chat Reference)

(The assessment for is very general and only covers the basic elements of a reference transaction. If your reference encounter cannot be fully assessed by this form, you can add whatever you consider relevant to the assessment in Section G. On the other hand, if some of the questions on the form do not apply to your reference case, just answer "N/A" and provide a brief explanation.)

Your name: Rachael-Joy Cowham

Your question to the information professional:
"I am looking for information on sex trafficking in the United States. I have a personal interest in the subject and would like to thoroughly educate myself. I would like to find information about men, women, and children who have been forced into sex trafficking against their will. I wish to locate information on the history of U.S. sex trafficking and more recent scholarly articles (2005-present) on the subject."

Service type: __ IM chat reference; X Web-based chat reference.

Name and URL of service:
http://www.questionpoint.org/crs/servlet/org.oclc.home.TFSRedirect?virtcategory=11238

A. Approachability:

1. What was the screen name of the information professional?

Sonoma County Librarian Ruth

2. How long was it before the user was connected and received the first message from the information professional?

Less than 30 seconds.

3. How did the information professional greet the user, or acknowledge the user's presence?

[Librarian 17:41:42]: Hi Rachael, great question!

4. Please rate the information professional's approachability according to the following scale:

   a. Unsatisfactory: queuing time too long; no greetings.

   b. Moderately satisfactory: queuing time reasonable; user was acknowledged; general greetings.

c. Very satisfactory: queuing time next to zero; user was greeted pleasantly.

B. Assessing the Information Need:

5. What was the information professional's first reaction to the user's question/statement?

[Librarian 17:41:42]: Hi Rachael, great question! The best place to find this information is at your library's electronic resources. Have you tried this yet?

6. Did the information professional attempt to clarify the user's information need by asking questions? If so, were they open or closed questions?

There were really no questions asked other than if I'd tried looking at the library's electronic resources.

7. Did the information professional attempt to find out what the user already knew about the subject? If yes, how (please describe)

No.

8. Did the information professional's responses indicate enthusiasm for the information need? If yes, please specify:

Yes, she was encouraging; aware that I was unfamiliar with the electronic resources. She used words like "great!" "does that make sense?" Okay, Great! Let me show you" and "Good luck."

9. Did the information professional's responses indicate boredom or disinterest in the information need? If yes, please specify:

Not in any way!

10. Please rate the information professional's clarification of the user's needs on the following scale:

    a. Unsatisfactory: information professional made no attempt to clarify user's information needs.

    b. Moderately satisfactory: information professional made an attempt to clarify user's information needs, asked some questions, appeared somewhat interested in the user's need.

C. Active Search Behaviors:

11. Did the information professional explain what she was doing as she conducted the search?

Yes.

12. Did the information professional offer any instruction on information searching or using library resources?

Yes!
[Librarian 17:44:07]: Okay, here is what I would recommend.
[Librarian 17:44:59]: Ebsco Host, Ponts of View Reference Center, and Student Research Center.
[Librarian 17:45:54]: TIP: Each one of these has a HELP page that will tell you how it likes to be searched. 1. you want to 'limit' your search to 'full-text' articles ONLY, so you get the article right online.
[Rachael 17:46:36]: ok, so they will walk me through the search pricess?
[Librarian 17:47:08]: 2. to limit to scholary journals it will give you choice of 'peer-reveiwed' or 'refereed'. Select this to limit to academic journals.
[Librarian 17:47:59]: Racheal, because I am not with your library system I can't access this resource with you. But if you take the suggestions I made you into consideration you should do fine with your searching.

13. Did the information professional provide detailed directions on how to access the resources she has located for the user?

Yes!
[Rachael 17:49:21]: If I run into trouble should I try logging back in?
[Librarian 17:50:17]: YES, if you run across any trouble log back on. Another TIP:
[Librarian 17:51:11]: when you find one article that is exactly what you want, look at the 'subject' of the article. It should be 'hyperlinked', meaning if you click on that 'subject' it will take you to ALL the articles on that 'subject' in the resource you are in.
[Librarian 17:51:29]: Does that make sense?
[Rachael 17:51:38]: ok! Yes
[Librarian 17:51:54]: GREAT! Good luck with your research Rachael.

14. Please rate the information professional's active search behaviors on the following scale:

a. Unsatisfactory: information professional conducted the search without explanation or instruction, just gave user a list of resources without explaining how to access them.

b. Moderately satisfactory: searches explained, provided directions for users to access resources.

c. Very satisfactory: information professional well explained searches, nicely offered instruction, provided detailed directions for users to access resources.

D. Follow-Up Behaviors:

15. If the information professional was not able to fully answer the question right away, did she follow up in an email to provide further resources?

We were disconnected at the end of the chat and the information professional was not finished giving me resources. She provided those resources in an email after we were disconnected. She made sure I got the information. Also, she made sure to tell me multiple times to log back on if I needed more help.

16. Did the information professional check with the user to see if the recommended resource(s) were relevant and/or appropriate?

No.

17. Did the information professional encourage the user to return if the information was not pertinent or unclear?

Yes.

18. Please rate the follow up behaviors on the following scale:

a. Unsatisfactory: information professional performed no follow-up with the user, did not encourage user to return to the service.

b. Satisfactory: information professional checked to see if the resources were pertinent, encouraged user to return to the service if there were more questions.

E. Accuracy of the search:

19. Was the information professional able to provide satisfactory resources to answer the question, in other words, was she skilled at creating search strategies that yield accurate and relevant results?

Yes.

F. User Satisfaction:

20. Based on this reference interaction, would you be willing to return to the same individual for additional information needs?

Yes.

G. Summarize the interaction, including 1) a brief recap of the reference interaction as it occurred, 2). the perceived level of success of the reference transaction, 3). overall evaluation of the service according to the RUSA guidelines, 4). suggestions on possible improvement of the reference service and conclusion.

1. When the information professional logged on she greeted me with a hello and said she was reading my question. She stared off encouraging by saying that I had a great question. This got me excited right away and I know it would be a good interview. After asking if I had done some looking around the library's electronic resources already she started her search. She said: *Here is your library's list of resources. Let me take a closer look and recommend the best ones to use. Be right back!* <u>*http://www.solanolibrary.com/databases/*</u>. Then the information professional provided some searching tips and made sure everything made sense and we were done. Because I ended the session prematurely, the information professional made sure to include some extra information that she wanted me to have in a follow-up email right away.
2. My perceived success level of the transaction was very successful. I would say the most successful out of all three transactions. The information professional was prompt, informative, enthusiastic, and encouraging. She provided relevant resources and made sure I was comfortable with the search strategy before we disconnected.
3. Overall, the information professional followed the RUSA guidelines perfectly.
4. I have no suggestions for improvement of this chat service.