Education and Interpretation

Education - To provide schooling, to develop mentally and morally by instruction (nothing about understanding)

Interpret - To explain the meaning of (communicate), a planned effort to create an understanding

British Columbia Park System

Interpretation is an educational activity that aims to reveal meaning and relationships through the use of original objects, by first-hand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information.

Why?

Ways of Interpretation

- Classes, Workshops, Seminars
- Signage
- Fieldtrips
- Tape Recorders/Headsets
- Hand-Held Computers
- Maps
- Pamphlets
- Internet
- Festivals
- Demonstrations
- Passive
DISPLAY IS NOT ENOUGH!!

- Display is primary activity to reach out to audiences
- Object - not individual
- Today - Visitor is center to the experience

PICASSO IS NOT ENOUGH!!

Reasons For Shift:
- Understanding learning process
- Sophisticated entertainment industry
- New ways of thinking about knowledge
- Skyrocketing costs/dwindling philanthropic (giving for the good of others) incentives
PROCESS MODEL
Planning of Interpretive Programs

Step 1 - Target your audience
- Surveys
- Census data
- Market research

Step 2 - Frontline research
- Visitor's knowledge, assumptions, attitudes, or expectations
- Psychographic data
- Recreational mode
- Surveys, focus groups, advisory committee, teachers, community leaders

Step 3 - Write project goals
- Benchmark against which project can be evaluated
- Things to consider:
  - Mission statement
  - Purpose of collection
  - Audience needs
  - Staffing issues
  - Resources
PROCESS MODEL
Planning of Interpretive Programs

Step 4 - Develop and test a prototype
Sara Lee Schupf
Summer Institutes (NYBG)

Selecting Program Delivery Methods
- What activities/learning experiences are most appropriate?
- Are the methods appropriate for accomplishing the objectives?
- What is the most logical sequence of activities?
- What routine of events can be used to enhance this program?
- Do the learning activities build logically on other learning experiences?

Selecting and/or Developing Resource Materials
- Consider how the resource materials support the content of the program.
- What materials are needed?
- Do they address the need of the target audience?
- Are the needed materials available?
- Who will develop the needed materials?
Constructing a Time Line for Implementation

- Outline and track tasks necessary to plan, implement and evaluate programs.
- List activities to be accomplished.
- List time to complete activity.
- List target dates and work backwards.

PROCESS MODEL
Planning of Interpretive Programs

- Step 5 - Evaluation and Revision
- Evaluation
  - systematic process of determining the worth the program
  - Summative evaluation - to prove something
  - Formative evaluation - to improve something

To prove something.

- Summative Evaluation.
  - Collect evidence for reports.
  - Document achievement of objectives.
  - Justify expenditures.
  - Assess program impact and outcomes.
  - Increase visibility of programs.
  - Promote public relations.
  - Measure economic benefit to participants.
To improve something.

- Formative Evaluation.
  - Find out what works with a particular audience.
  - Help educators grow professionally.
  - Increase efficiency.
  - Provide personal satisfaction.

Steps in Evaluation:

- Select what to evaluate.
- Plan how to determine to what extent the objectives have been met.
- Collect the evidence.
- Analyze the evidence.
- Report the results.

Data Collection Methods:

- Interviews/questionnaires--delivery stage.
- Telephone surveys--completion stage.
- End-of-meeting questionnaires--completion stage.
- Mailed questionnaires--completion stage.
ULTIMATE GOAL

- To lead people to greater concern and intelligent action to sustain the natural and cultural environment in which people live.
- To create a more informed citizenry.