



MSCOPE

Project 2: Design and carry out an evaluation

Investigate people's experiences in MSI. The focus will be on the visitors: How do they interact with an exhibit? What do they learn? What are their interests and expectations when they come to the museum? What is important for them? What do they think should be done different?

For your assigned project:

- Get some basic background research on the exhibit/program/topic that you will evaluate (find the goals, background information, talk to people from MSI)
- Define objectives and generate survey questions
- Choose the evaluation technique (observational, structured/open-ended interviews, questionnaires/surveys)
- Carry out the evaluation
- Analyze and discuss the results

Considerations:

Use the background information you collect in order to define what questions are most important and how the data will be used. Define the target audience. Try to get a representative sample and collect data systematically. Plan to come to the museum several times to get a variety of visitor responses (one of you can come on a Saturday, let's say, and one can come during a weekday). A good start to a survey would be to have at least 25 completed responses, and figure realistically it will take you about an hour and a half to get 10 people to fill out a 5-10 minute survey.

You should stagger your visits at MSI - if 5 groups all show up on the same day demanding surveys, visitors may be less likely to fill any out (people only want to fill out 1 survey max on a trip).

Important Dates:

You should plan on having collected your data by Friday, November 17th

Evaluation reports will be due on Friday, December 1st.

You will present your results during the last meeting of the quarter.

Related Readings

- “*Practical Evaluation Guide, Tools for Museums & other Informal Education Settings*”, Judy Diamond, Altamira Press, 1999
- “*Planning for People in Museum Exhibitions*”, Kathleen McLean, **Chapters 5-6**, ASTC, 1993
- *NSF Evaluation guide* <http://www.ehr.nsf.gov/EHR/REC/pubs/NSF97-153/start.htm>

Project List

1. Evaluate Body Human Stem Cell Prototypes
2. Survey for Exploration-Mars Exhibition
3. Evaluate Nano-science Lab Prototypes