



Guidelines for Implementing Special Event Surveys

I. Getting Ready for the Survey

- Review the survey so you are **very familiar** with the questions
- Wear comfortable shoes
- Bring water and a hat if it is sunny
- Bring extra pencils or pens
- Consider offering a small token of appreciation for visitors who agree to take the survey. Inexpensive items from your museum store work well (e.g., pencils, stickers); a cold cup of lemonade and/or a small snack also work very well as an incentive. Turn off your cell phone.

II. Selecting Whom You Will Interview

- Choose a location near where visitors are beginning to exit the event
- If possible, choose a place that is shaded
- Fill out top part of survey with name, location and date.
- If you are working with another person, select two locations that are not next to each other
- The location must be specific such as “this tree,” or “this bench” or “by this turn in the path”
- Then select a number (nothing more than 3; can also be 1)
- You will approach the 1st or 2nd or 3rd person who walks by the tree, bench, etc... no matter what they look like!
- **DO NOT** approach guests who are with a guided tour, or a scout group, daycare etc...

III. Inviting the Guest to Participate in the Interview

- Make eye contact with that (1st, 2nd, 3rd) person who crosses your location and find out if they need help, have questions etc...
- Asking them if they have any questions first helps to start the conversation and to offer them something before you ask for their help
- If a group of visitors walk by such as a couple or a family select that person who meets your criteria (1st, 2nd, 3rd) and who is 18 years or above
- If you notice you have been getting more females than males to talk with you OR more males than females, make eye contact with the gender that is underrepresented in your sample as you ask them if they have any questions or need any help

- Then use the words on the survey to ask them to participate in the survey
- If they say yes, then let them know that you only need one person to answer the questions and the other travel party members can stay and listen in or they can all meet up together at some location after the interview
- If for some reason, you are not getting many people agreeing to talk with you, experiment with finding another location and see if that makes it easier.

IV. **After the last question**

- Very often, the most interesting comments will come out after you have ended the interview
- Be prepared to pick your clipboard back up and take notes on what they are saying after the interview has ended
- If you have more than one person doing interviews on the same day give the visitor a sticker to wear and explain that wearing it will prevent other staff from asking them to do an interview
- If you are offering a small gift make sure to give it to them
- As soon as they have left, find a quiet place to review your survey and make sure that the comments you wrote down are legible and can be easily understood by someone who was not there; make sure you take time to do this no matter what. Pull out the next blank survey and fill in name, date, location and then look up and start counting and select the next 1st, 2nd or 3rd person to cross that location.

V. **Key Points to Keep in Mind**

- Having a positive outlook about all of this will transfer over to your interviewee and make them feel more comfortable about doing the survey
- Keep the actual invitation as short as possible. If your introduction is not short, they will fear that you will be too chatty and the survey will be too long.
- If they say something you don't understand or hear, ask them to repeat it
- Use neutral probes if they are giving you really general answers.
- Examples of neutral probes that will help them give more specific answers are:
Can you say more about that?
Can you give an example of what you mean by that?
Another trick is to just repeat the word they used and then wait ... it may cause them to talk more about it after they hear you say it.