

# TEAMS

*Criteria for Rich and At-Risk Exhibits*

# *Rich exhibits...*

- Scientific content that is accurate
- Immediate attraction and appeal
- Enough variety of types of experience
- Holding power
- Fun and delightful (these are 2 different things)
- Opportunities for engagement for people of different ages
- Can come into the experience with different levels of understanding
- Allowing for open-ended experiences
- Some “linear” aspects: “if it’s totally open ended that will not appeal to everyone”
- People would say: I want to know something more about it.
- Provokes interaction: physical, intellectual and emotional
- Provokes re-utilization, and thoughtful discourse with the phenomenon
- I want to hear visitors talking – dialog is sparked by the exhibit
- Multiple layers of complexity; visitor gets to choose

# *Rich exhibits...*

- Universal access
- Aesthetically pleasing
- Good lighting and colors
- Being comfortable, and space for watching
- Desire to share the experience with others
- Taking familiar phenomena and deepening the relationship and understanding; provokes visitors to look at it in a new way
- Uniqueness; reflects local community; not mass-produced
- Everything works!
- Clarity of exhibit; absence of people saying “I don’t get it”
- Easy navigation; graphics that complement the physical phenomenon
- Something emotional opens up – a sense of expanded possibilities; encouraged the making of conjectures
- Opportunities to theorize
- Well-crafted labels
- Promotes understanding
- Sights, sounds: multi-sensory

# *At-risk exhibits...*

- Worn-out, broken, not cared for
- “Being lectured at” – being spoken down to. Too many words
- Feeling like I should know something; where designers presume that I am smarter or stupider than I am
- No opportunity to learn for myself
- Locus of authority – stance towards visitor is that all the authority is with the designer/museum
- 100% linear
- When an exhibit is the wrong media for presenting the phenomenon

# *At-risk exhibits...*

- Can't figure out what to do
- Distracting components to the exhibit
- Unsafe
- Design does not promote interaction or causes conflict between goals and activities
- Inherently un-interesting idea (this was controversial – someone said “*all* ideas are interesting...)
- Doesn't have “soul”
- For an exhibition: Doesn't have a story-line; no coherency. Also, no diversity of experiences
- The same thing happens every time – no reason to revisit
- Does not stand-alone as an exhibit (within an exhibition)

# *Rich exhibitions...*

- Allows for an interaction around a real thing – the real thing vs. the science itself
- Stimulates interest of, comes from designer/team
- Some felt a need for a primary carrier of the project: i.e., designer as primary author: carries the energy; supported by loving, encouraging team.
- Others felt it's more important to have the collaborative, for all to have input, even if there have to be compromises.
- Need for a “source” and for team ownership??
- Market interest
- Issues include whether the exhibit is a traveling vs. permanent exhibition
- “Timeless” quality
- “Relatable” – visitor can connect own knowledge, experience to topic

# *Rich exhibitions...*

Need to be able to think of a core of some specific, concrete exhibit ideas in early stages of development

Important: to NSF, to our visitors.

- The science is...
  - Core
  - Makes a contribution to our visitors lives
  - Connectable
  - Allows for exploration
  - Opportunities for developing intuitive relationships with phenomena
- Downsides
  - An example of a downside is an exhibition topic that needs “too much technology”
  - Sensationalistic nature to topic
  - “Amenable to bias re-adjustment”
- Feasibility
  - Group has the capacity to do the project and market it
  - Works for multiple ages