



**NATURAL
HISTORY
MUSEUM**

Choosing your method

Georgina Bishop



What do you want to find out?

How will the information be used?

Who is it for?

Choosing your method(s)

- Quantitative
- Qualitative
- Triangulation

Areas to consider

- How many people think something
- Why people think something
- How views vary according to the type of visitor
- Emotional response
- Explore a range of views
- Statistical data
- Be able to generalise about the results

Tools

- Accompanied visits
- Behavioural mapping
- Eavesdropping
- Tracking
- Videoing
- Product/output of programme
- Diaries
- Photos
- Statistics
- Peer review
- Rating
- Task oriented e.g. drawing,,role play
- Games e.g. memory game, top trumps
- Interviews
- Personal meaning mapping
- Discussion groups
- Questionnaires
- Visitor comments
- Texting
- Voting
- Focus groups

Observing visitors

- Visitor tracking around gallery/site
Observe visitor flow, dwell time, behaviour, interactions
- Observing a single exhibit
What learning is happening?, interactions, usability, problem exhibits
- Qualitative but can be turned into quantitative results.
- Time consuming
- Good for getting whole team involved



Accompanied visits

- Put yourself in your visitors' shoes
- Often used for underrepresented groups where they may be a barrier to visiting
- Good for understanding why
- Time consuming to set up/gather data/analyse
- Temptation to try to improve visit instead of observing
- How about trying it yourself?



Visitors' comments/Visitor book

- What visitors' think and feel in their own words.
- Can be grouped according to categories e.g. ILFA
- Easy to set up and gather data
- Data could be skewed by extreme views
- Taking visitor comments further....



Existing statistics/mechanisms

- What information does your institution already collect?
- What does it already tell you about your visitors?
- How could you use it to find out more about your visitors?
- E.g. magic eye, school bookings



Conclusion

- Make sure the method fits the purpose of the evaluation study rather than making the study fit the method
- Ensure you have enough time/resources to carry it out robustly
- Don't be afraid to try new things

Questions?

