

EDUCATION ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

BEST PRACTICES REVIEW SERIES

Topic: Evaluating Environmental Education and Interpretation

Best Practice: Experiences are evaluated for effective delivery.

Delivering learner-centered experiences requires the use of a variety of effective communication strategies. Activities should be age-appropriate and experiences should match the attributes of different learners. Instructors should know and use techniques for creating safe and conducive learning environments both indoors and outside. As well, instructors should be able to assess whether program outcomes are being met.

This observation tool will help the evaluator watch, listen, and systematically record specific skills, behaviors, and attributes of program instructors. The evaluator can document actual behaviors, rather than what instructors may intend to do but do not accomplish. Not only will this observation help determine if the program is being delivered as planned, but it is an ideal tool for giving non-threatening, constructive feedback to improve program delivery.

The evaluator should observe the program in an unobtrusive way – not as a participant. The evaluator and the instructor should both be familiar with the observation form and be in agreement with what each behavior and/or attribute might look like. The evaluator records and (where appropriate) describes the situation and activity without judging. The evaluator and instructor then meet to share feedback and experiences.

Site _____

Date _____

Instructor _____

Evaluator (observer) _____

Participants _____

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1. Instructor's Awareness				
Relevant and understandable	Exceptional	Exactly right	Needs improvement	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used appropriate vocabulary, metaphors and analogies 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Made connections to learner on personal level; related material to things they know or could imagine 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issues addressed and presentation style were age appropriate 				
Connect with diverse audiences	Exceptional	Exactly right	Needs improvement	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responded to audience needs and motivations 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quickly assessed the groups' learning potential and baseline knowledge 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicated objectives and expectations 				
2. Instructor's Techniques				
Higher level thinking	Exceptional	Exactly right	Needs improvement	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation incorporated higher level approaches (<i>how and why</i>) and minimized lower level approaches (<i>what?</i>) 				
Behavior during instruction	Exceptional	Exactly right	Needs improvement	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used appropriate responses to audiences and appropriate cultural norms 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Showed flexibility to adapt program to situations that arise 				
Balanced viewpoints	Exceptional	Exactly right	Needs improvement	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation techniques used to ensure all perspectives were represented. Presented differing viewpoints and theories in a balanced manner. 				

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Learner-centered	Exceptional	Exactly right	Needs improvement	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used good questioning skills 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Was the material presented or discovered? Was the audience mostly active or mostly passive? 				
Group management	Exceptional	Exactly right	Needs improvement	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Behavior management 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group movement 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety 				
Tools and technologies	Exceptional	Exactly right	Needs improvement	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used tools, objects, props, and/or technologies in ways that supported defined outcomes 				
3. Content				
	Exceptional	Exactly right	Needs improvement	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content was factually accurate 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content was engaging, relevant, and understandable 				
4. Assessment				
	Exceptional	Exactly right	Needs improvement	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used at least one method of assessment for experience 				

Reflection

What worked well?

What could be changed?

Other comments about the program:

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