

Working with Custom/Private Groups

Participants present

Jenny Golding (YA), Rebecca Pardo (YA), Josephine Jacobsmeyer (Shaw Nature Preserve), David Titcomb (AK), Gary Thompson (McCall Outdoor Science School)

People that want a program that falls outside of typical offerings.

Discussion topics

Small group private educational programs.

Level of customization & service.

Communication & information exchange.

How do you control group dynamics?

Pros & Cons of conferences/groups with no programming

YA – menu driven options, staff instructors

Important to know and convey your boundaries

SNP – lump costs work better than per person rates, participants seem to like that, struggle with arrival times (have to clearly convey to a group)

No staff on site during the program

These groups are a great way to supplement income and fill schedule gaps.

McCall – large custom groups are mostly facility rentals, set clear expectations, hard to implement change with returning private groups

First contact – email

Second contact – participant fills out form six months out

Third contact – 30 days out, check in call to encourage details

Fourth contact – two weeks out, confirm numbers

Balance mission and money, these help fund other high-mission groups

Can you imprint your culture on these groups, in addition to your pure “educational message?”