

Session title	Selling quality impact vs. quantity to donors
Time/day	9:15 – 10:30am Saturday 1/27/07
Names of participants	Ken Voorhis (Lead) – Great Smokey Mtns. Inst. Tremont, TN Matt – Ctr for Nature Ed at Baltimore Woods, NU Jessica – Shaw Nature Center, MO Jen – Stokes Nature Ctr, UT Kendra –Cornell University, NY Benj – Teton Science School, WY Glen – Yosemite National Inst., CA Shiela – Delaware Nature Society, DE Josephine – Shaw Nature Center, MO Cynthia –Crows Neck Environmental Ed., MS Becky – Montana Outdoor Science School, MT Gregg - Montana Outdoor Science School, MT
Key questions	“How do you convince donors, board, bosses to look at quality vs the numbers as being important?”
Take home messages	Sell the “quantity of the quality” of the experience and make your sale to donors strike a personal level to be effective

“Quality” defined as providing an experience that will make a profound and lasting impression (deep impact) on the visitor.

Acting like a business is important for you and your donors

- 5-day programs can make money over 1 and 2 day programs, in spite of few number of students pass through each year
- Come forward with your business plan
- Need to legitimize residential quality – a way to express the value

How can you connect “quality” with the donors?

- Past experience of the donors themselves in a residency program
- Citing work that focuses on quality (ie. Kendra’s research, “Lost Child in the Woods”)
- Educate donors that this is a long term investment
- Reorganize the numbers you have such as USER DAYS/USER HOURS vs. # students
- List valuable studies as link to web site – ie. Yosemite/Stanford Study
- Quotes or tales from spokespeople that remember their experience as testimonials from users (but these are hard to dig up)

Getting the word out there advertising “quality”

- Study links to your program’s web site
- Journal articles and speaking at conferences
- Clear and informative to present the data of the study

Performing qualitative research of your institution can be prohibitively expensive and too intensive for most programs to afford

Gathering data on quality/impact:

- Solicit quotes from evaluations from alum
- Personal interviews without leading questions – get them to tell you quotes on your own
- Stimulate quotes by asking REFLECTING questions
- Thank you notes from visitors/children
- Scale answers on surveys on a scale of 1 to 4 so the person taking the survey must choose between 2 and 3 (no middle number exists that has not meaning, like on a 1 to 5 scale)
- Make sure to differentiate between qualitative research and quotes
- Can you link experiences at residential programs with improved results on standardized tests?

Things that enhance the quality of the experience:

- Revisit a particular nature center or site multiple times
- Culminating experience (ie. Staying at camp can be a right of passage from 5th grade into 6th grade)

What has worked to convince donors to give money based on quality vs quantity:

- Bring donor on site to see what the experience is about ***
- Slide presentation full of photos showing kids in action shown at presentations in the background, DVD mailings, website miniature video downloads **