

The Modern Museum I

Science Museum – background & visitor service

‘We engage people in a dialogue to create meanings about the past, present and future of human ingenuity’

Sally Davies
Head of Commercial Operations
September 2006



Introduction

- Overview of The Science Museum
- Visitor Service at the Science Museum: Operations Department



Overview of The Science Museum

Science museum facts

- Free entry since 1st Dec 2001
- Over 200,000 objects, 10% on display at any one time
- 2,000 hands-on exhibits
- 2.2 million visitors every year, including 300 000 educational groups
- 600 staff
- Half a kilometre from front to back of Museum



Overview of the Science Museum

Our visitors & funding

- Type of visits
 - ✓ Families
 - ✓ Educational
 - ✓ Independent adults
 - ✓ Tourists
- Funding
 - ✓ Government grant-in-aid
 - ✓ Trading Company
 - ✓ Corporate partners
 - ✓ Sponsors



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sciencemuseum

Overview of The Science Museum

What's on?

- Non-commercial
 - ✓ Permanent galleries
 - ✓ Free temporary exhibitions
 - ✓ Interactive exhibits
 - ✓ Events and shows
- Commercial
 - ✓ IMAX 3D Cinema
 - ✓ Simulator rides
 - ✓ Charged temporary exhibitions



Info



Division of visitor facing roles

- Explainers, Retail Assistants, Catering, Security and Operations
- Operations a part of NMSI Trading Ltd, established 1989 to generate revenue for Museum from commercial activities and provide income to support upkeep and development of the museum



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Responsibilities

- Up to 40 FT, PT and casual staff daily
- Trade-up to commercial activities, ticket desks, call centre
- Information provision, reception
- IMAX Cinema, simulator rides, temporary exhibitions
- Queue talking, leafleting
- Delivering high standards of service
- Health and Safety



The importance of high visitor service standards

- Good reputation
- Increased sales and revenue
- More customers by word of mouth – e.g. birthday parties
- Repeat visits: 48% of visitors come again



Different types of visitor service

- 1-2-1 and 1-2-many: individual sales vs. speeches to groups
- Meeting high expectations of service
- Visitor facing and phone contact
- Balancing sales with information provision
- Dealing with distressed customers
- Responding to written complaints and other correspondence



Seasonal business

- Peak and off-peak periods, school holidays every 2 months
- Visitor figures: from 3,000 – 20,000 per day
- IMAX: 300 – 2200 visitors per day
- Staffing levels: from 20 – 40 per day
- Use of temporary staff



Developing, assessing and maintaining standards

- Vigorous recruitment process
- Induction and ongoing training, performance management
- Personal presentation – uniform, name badges, language
- Assessment – Mystery Shopper, feedback, observation
- Policies – COP, SOP-s, SLA-s, daily checks



Thank you for listening

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