Training—Science and Society Conversations

Time
30 minutes

Materials
- SPEED-UCATE or How to have an effective science and society conversation video
- Copies of this training worksheet for participants (optional)
- Pens for jotting notes
- Tips for Visitor Conversations document

Training overview
1. Watch the SPEED-UCATE video (Pause the video when prompted!)
   - While you watch, note things the museum facilitators could have done better during their conversations.
2. While the video is paused discuss, as a group, the strengths and weaknesses of the different conversations.
3. Finish watching SPEED-UCATE.
   - While you watch, note things that the museum facilitator did well during his conversation.
   - Discuss the elements of a successful visitor conversation.
   - Review the second page of this document for some things you may have noticed while watching the video.
   - Refer to Tips for Visitor Conversations document for reminders.

Notes
How NOT to converse with visitors

• The facilitator dominates the conversation.
• The facilitator interrupts the visitor.
• The facilitator talks down to the visitor.
• The facilitator does not use the props appropriately.
• The facilitator is unprepared.
• The facilitator’s body language is uninviting.
• The facilitator does not ask questions, just talks.
• The facilitator speaks too quickly, too quietly, or without confidence.
• The facilitator ends the conversation abruptly.

How to converse with visitors

• The facilitator is approachable.
• The facilitator put the visitor at ease.
• The facilitator asks pointed questions.
• The facilitator goes where the conversation leads.
• The facilitator is a good listener.
• The facilitator maintains eye contact.
• The facilitator repeats back statements to help clarify what the visitor is saying.
• The facilitator welcomes differing opinions and is not confrontational.
• The facilitator keeps the conversation open-ended.
• The facilitator adapts language and tone to the level of the audience.
• The facilitator shares accurate information.
• The facilitator points the visitor to specific places to find more information.
• The facilitator is well mannered and thanks the visitor for chatting.

If time allows, show the video a second time, stopping at each “bad” practice to discuss how the conversation could have gone differently or been more effective and appropriate.