

SOS Network meeting 2009:

Best practices in docent/interpreter presentations

Written by Shawn Rowe

Notes

Research on staff/volunteer training to use SOS and MP with visitors

Our assumption behind our research (Céleste Barthel – Oregon State University, Wilson College)

We can create all kinds of exhibits that facilitate learning for visitors, but if staff don't also know how to facilitate learning, then you're sunk. Unfortunately, most staff get very little professional development in content or learning theory – they get scripts and exhibit training. But it is docents and volunteers who are integral in scaffolding visitors into complex exhibits and content. So it's worth looking at professional development of staff in content (Complex scientific visualizations) and learning theory (COSIA)).

Looking at changes in discourse and presentation practices as well as Self-efficacy. Moving people toward encouraging meaning making and inquiry rather than stand and deliver content around beautiful and complex images.

Lifelong learning (rather than short term training) as the goal

Connecting to the scientists and science is a great way to get staff/volunteers personally interested in the science and the technology – and that is the key to their own lifelong learning.