Welcome!

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Sit in groups of 5

2. Write on your index card:
   - What you hope to get out of this session
   - A song that brings you JOY

Rainey Tisdale | raineytisdale@gmail.com | @raineytisdale
Marieke Van Damme | marieke.vandamme@gmail.com | @joyfulmuseums
FIRST COURSE:
Sensory Experiences

Rainey Tisdale | raineytisdale@gmail.com | @raineytisdale
Marieke Van Damme | marieke.vandamme@gmail.com | @joyfulmuseums
What's In It For Museum Staff?

NEMA 2019

Rainey Tisdale | raineytisdale@gmail.com | @raineytisdale
Marieke Van Damme | marieke.vandamme@gmail.com | @joyfulmuseums
How can museum staff get more of what visitors get?
Working in museums: Good or Bad?
What negative experiences have you seen in the workplace?

- People not getting paid what they are worth: 85%
- Passive aggressive behavior: 79%
- Upper management is uncommunicative/unresponsive: 74%
- Lack of appreciation: 72%
- Hard work going unnoticed: 68%
- Individuals working in silos instead of working together: 67%
- Poor work/life balance: 53%
- Favoritism: 50%
- Excessive gossip: 48%
- People getting yelled at in front of others: 38%
- Cliques: 36%
- Harassment (in any form): 32%
What do you think being “happy at work” means?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am engaged in my projects/tasks</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy the people I work with/I have work friends</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel productive</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know that the work I do has an impact</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a good work/life balance</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like working for my boss</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have autonomy</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My employer offers me flexible benefits</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a decent commute</td>
<td>47%</td>
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</table>
If you were happy at work, how would that change your behavior, both in the short and long term?

“I would feel more motivated in the short and long term if I felt more supported and appreciated.”

“Currently, I'm just not motivated to be innovative, since there's no push for that.”

“I would be encouraged in the work I have completed and would feel more satisfied with my five years here.”

“I would be more willing to stay with my current institution longer. Would invest more time going ‘above and beyond’ my responsibilities.”

“It would make me take more pride in the way I work.”

Joyful Museums ❤️
“Why did you enter the field?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Love museums</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love content area</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-discipline nature of field</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-focused</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-profit</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Claudia Ocello, Dawn Salerno, Sarah Erdman, Marieke Van Damme, Why are Great Museum Workers Leaving the Field? survey, 2016
How can museum staff get more of what visitors get?
What do you think being “happy at work” means?

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1. Museum workers have to put oxygen masks on themselves before putting them on visitors.
2. We are humans, not robots.
3. This is not a one-size-fits-all situation.
SECOND COURSE:
Museum of You

Rainey Tisdale | raineytisdale@gmail.com | @raineytisdale
Marieke Van Damme | marieke.vandamme@gmail.com | @joyfulmuseums
10 Things Visitors Get from Museums

1. Access to knowledge, space/time to learn something new & grow as a person
2. Access to special spaces with a strong sense of place and sensory immersion
3. Social experiences; bonding (connecting with people you know) and bridging (connecting with strangers)
4. Connecting with objects: deep looking, learning, meaning making
5. Experience wonder
6. Escape from everyday life
7. Stories
8. Grapple with issues/ideas/universal human themes that truly matter
9. Free choice learning/autonomy over their experience
10. Support for Falk’s visitor types
Visitors Get:

- Access to knowledge
- Space/time to learn something new & grow as a person

How to Give it to Museum Staff:

- Allocate funds for professional development
- Brown bag lunch seminars
- Buy & share books for staff; form staff book groups
Visitors Get:

- Access to special spaces with a strong sense of place and sensory immersion

2. How to Give it to Museum Staff:

- Attend to your workspaces! Do they feel special?
- Can you improve on the sensory experiences in your work: sight, touch, smell, sound, taste?
- Bring each other “behind the scenes” of what you do
- Can friends of your museum—board members, colleagues at other orgs—share their special spaces?
Visitors Get:

- Social experiences; bonding (connecting with people you know) and bridging (connecting with strangers)

3. How to Give it to Museum Staff:

- Create social events for staff based on what we know works for visitors: memorable shared experiences, social objects, etc.
- Encourage interns and other newcomers to add their own unique perspective to the social mix
- Increase board/staff interactions
Visitors Get:

- Connecting with objects: deep looking, learning, meaning making

How to Give it to Museum Staff:

- Connect staff with objects!
- Start meetings with a collection object, hold meetings in the galleries whenever possible
- Staff get to adopt an object or do staff favorites labels
- Encourage collections database browsing
Visitors Get:

- Experience wonder

5.

How to Give it to Museum Staff:

- Share wondrous things with each other, whether they come from museum content or the outside world
- Weekly moment of wonder?
Visitors Get:

- Escape from everyday life

6. How to Give it to Museum Staff:

- “Unplug” days
- Workcations
- Use your days off
- Take walks in fresh air during breaks
Visitors Get:

- Stories

7. How to Give it to Museum Staff:

- What are the stories your staff hear and tell?
- Literature on workplace storytelling
Visitors Get:

- Grapple with issues/ideas/universal human themes that truly matter

8.

How to Give it to Museum Staff:

- Engage staff in building institutional vision and developing projects that truly matter (examples: openness at Musee McCord Stewart, curiosity at History Nebraska, mass incarceration at Eastern State Penitentiary)
Visitors Get:

- Free choice learning, autonomy over their experience

How to Give it to Museum Staff:

- Give workers flex time, autonomy over how they carry out their responsibilities
Visitors Get:

- Support for John Falk’s visitor types

How to Give it to Museum Staff:

- Explorers: staff curiosity
- Facilitators: staff facilitate colleagues’ growth
- Experience seekers: staff “collect” iconic work experiences
- Rechargers: staff recharge like visitors
- Professionals/Hobbyists: staff bring hobbies to work
THIRD COURSE:
Sharing Stories

Rainey Tisdale | raineytisdale@gmail.com | @raineytisdale
Marieke Van Damme | marieke.vandamme@gmail.com | @joyfulmuseums
Small group processing and brainstorming

- Talk through what we’ve shared and what it means to you
- Brainstorm other ideas or ways of approaching this issue
How to convince your boss this is a thing
Disengaged employees have 37% higher absenteeism, 18% lower productivity and 15% lower profitability.

That’s a cost of 34% of a disengaged employee’s annual salary, or $3,400 for every $10,000 they make.

“How Much Are Your Disengaged Employees Costing You?” Forbes.com, May 2, 2019
Q + A
Thanks for coming!

Rainey Tisdale | raineytisdale@gmail.com | @raineytisdale
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