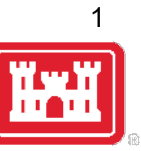# TODAY'S TRAINING - "INTERPRETIVE BASICS"

❑ Everyone will be placed on MUTE

❑ Please turn off your video feed

❑ Ask Questions in the Comment Box during the presentation

❑ At the Conclusion we will open it up for more questions

INTERPRETATION BASICS

Roseana Burick, HQUSACE
Tim Bischoff, Rend Lake
Amanda Kruse, St Louis District
Samantha Ferrarelli, Harsha Lake
Ryan Braaten, Table Rock Lake

US Army Corps
of Engineers ®

TODAY'S AGENDA

❑ What is Interpretation?

❑ USACE Interpretive Goals

❑ Program Composition

- Specific theme, FOCUSED
- WOW factor/interactive
- PREPARE and PRACTICE!
- Props
- Program Length

❑ Presentation skills

❑ Example Program

"Many a guided tour is simply a vocal listing of facts and figures.
It is information that is so often given; it is **interpretation** which should have been accomplished."

Interpretation ≠ Teaching

NAI DEFINITION OF INTERPRETATION

Interpretation is a communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the inherent meanings of the resource.

INTERPRETIVE SERVICES GOALS

- Achieve *management objectives* using interpretive techniques

- Provide environmental education to *foster stewardship* of natural, cultural and created environments

- *Incorporate the USACE* civil works and military missions and accomplishments into interpretive programming

- Improve visitor and employee *safety* using interpretive techniques

- Use environmental education, partnerships, career development, recruitment and special programs and events to *encourage students to pursue careers in math and science*

- *Enhance visitor's experience and enjoyment* by anticipating their needs and providing interpretive resources to meet those needs

Remember: Interpretation is a tool that can help you do the other parts of your job more effectively. Your interpretive programs, displays, etc. must be based on one or more of these goals!

ER 1130-2-550, Chapter 4

SO, WHAT MAKES A GOOD PROGRAM?

To catch and keep your audience's attention, the program must:
- ❑ be easy to follow *(Organized)*
- ❑ connect to what matters to an audience *(Relevant)*
- ❑ be mentally pleasing to process *(Enjoyable)*

The program must be crafted for the audience.

Example: Today's animated films are designed for children but include gags, jokes, etc. for the adults.

HOW ARE WE GOING TO DEVELOP A GREAT PROGRAM?

We will use **POETRY**!

❑ A program that designed and presented without POETRY will not be successful.
❑ "Simply put, when your interpretation is Organized, Relevant, and Enjoyable for your audiences, you stand a good chance of provoking them to think." Sam Ham

Purposeful

Organized

Enjoyable

Thematic

Relevant

You

PURPOSEFUL

Further the missions of the agency
❑Communication and educational processes provided to internal and external audiences, which support the accomplishment of agency missions, tell the agency story, and reveal the meanings of, and relationships between natural, cultural, and created environments and features.

Purposes
❑interpreting agency missions or telling the agency *story*
❑promoting stewardship
❑saving lives
❑solving management problems

PURPOSEFUL PROVOCATION

"The chief aim of Interpretation is not instruction, but provocation." **Freeman Tilden**

Provocation not Education
*"Information, as such, is not Interpretation. Interpretation is **revelation** based upon information."* Freeman Tilden
❑ Not just information and facts, not fact puking
❑ Make them think and want to learn more
❑ 2 qualities to make it thought provoking
- ▪ " it must motivate the audience to process it by connecting things that matter to them - that is it must be **relevant** to them" Sam Ham
- ▪ "it must be perceived by the audience to be easy to understand and process." (**organized**) Sam Ham

Goals of Interpretation:
❑ Make connections
❑ Make memories
❑ Be thought provoking

ORGANIZED

Easy to process = Organized

❑ Presented in a way that is easy to follow
- ▪ Has to be easy for the audience to understand as they won't work for it or stay tuned if it is confusing or too hard to get the message.
- ▪ If the perceived reward is greater than the effort required to understand, they will pay attention.

❑ State the goals of your program upfront and summarize them again at the end of the program. (example: three most important amphibians in the wetland)

❑ Three subthemes or less which follow a logical train of thought and are each tied back to the main theme.
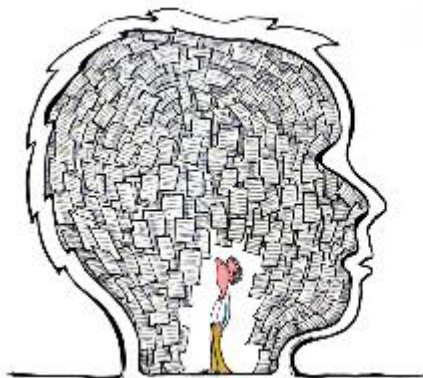
ENJOYABLE

Pleasing to process = Enjoyable

❑ Presented in a way that matches the audience's idea of having a good time.

❑ Noncaptive Audience: Participants can and will leave if the program is not enjoyable. You must grab their attention with a grabber/hook at the very beginning.

❑ Try to make the program interactive, changing scenes, lively, and colorful to maintain interest

RELEVANT

Motivated to process = Relevant

"Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile." Freeman Tilden

❑ Program must consistently link to things the audience already cares about to be successful
❑ Has to be relevant to the audience.
❑ We may find it exciting and important to us, but no one outside the agency may. You have to show why it is important to them, make it exciting and interesting, or choose something different.

Why would you visitors want to know this (your theme and the information you will be providing them with)?

How do you want the visitors to USE the information you are interpreting to them?

THEMATIC

The program is developed around a central message that captures a single whole idea you want your audience to think about.

What is a theme?
❑A short, simple, complete sentence containing only one idea which reveals the purpose of the presentation.
❑Provides organizational structure and clarifies understanding
❑Not the topic!
❑A theme should be specific and be interestingly worded (active verbs).

YOU!

❑ If you aren't having fun, they won't be having fun.

❑ You are human and humans make mistakes.

❑ Your presentation will never be "perfect" but should always be professional.

❑ You are the most important part
     of the program!

THREE INGREDIENTS FOR INTERPRETIVE SUCCESS

1. Get people to do something

2. Use concept repetition, concept repetition concept repetition, concept repetition

3. Make it personally relevant by using universal concepts to help people relate to your site!

PREPARE, PRACTICE, PRESENT!

Speakers are not born, they are Made

❑ Know Your Subject

❑ Practice, Prepare, Present

❑ Pause, Vary Your Voice

❑ Nonverbal Messages

❑ Self Assurance

To fail to prepare is to prepare to fail

PUBLIC SPEAKING TIPS

❑ OK to Say, "I don't Know??

❑ Know Your Audience – Connection

❑ Understandable Language

❑ One Idea/Theme with 3/4 Points

AUDIENCE AS THE JUDGE

58% - How You Look

7% - What You Say

35% - How You Sound

The Audience Wants You to Succeed

You Don't Have to be Perfect and Don't Apologize

Give Your Audience Something of Value

LOOK GOOD TO BE GOOD

❑ Should Presenters Care About Appearance?

❑ Greater than 50% of Success or Failure is Based on the Image YOU Portray.

❑ Pressed Pants/Shirts

❑ Polished Shoes

❑ Appearance High and Tight!

CALMING YOUR NERVES

❑ Make Sure Your Audio Visuals are Good to Go

❑ Have a Backup Plan

❑ Bring a Bottle of Water

❑ Deep Breathing

❑ Visualize Success

❑ Props

PROPS: GOOD, BAD, OR OTHERWISE

❑ Inexpensive/Everywhere

❑ Reach Out & Touch

❑ Reliable

❑ Props are Personal

❑ Organize Your Thoughts

❑ Maximizes Audience Attention

HOW LONG CAN YOU GO?

Two types of Programs:

❑ Taped for future viewing
  ▪ 10 minutes or less

❑ Interactive Program with Live Audience
  ▪ 45-60 minutes
  ▪ Leave time for questions
    ▪ Have a buddy to help you track questions

LET'S SEE IT LIVE!

7 Principles of Leave No Trace program

Ryan Braaten
Chief of Interpretation
SWD/Little Rock District/Table Rock Lake

QUESTIONS??

Find Interpretive Program ideas and training materials at the ISOP SharePoint Site:
https://cops.usace.army.mil/sites/NRM/ISO/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx