



## Observations of the Overlooked

*This recipe reveals why your favorite objects are being passed by and suggests ways to make them shine.*

**Prep: 45mins Cook: 2 hrs Digestion: 2 days**

### Ingredients

1 staff discussion  
1 favorite object or interactive  
2+ data collectors  
1 observation form  
20-30 copies of form  
2 clipboards\*  
2 writing utensils  
20-30 visitors  
Dash of imagination

\* Can be substituted with piece of cardboard or notebook

### Preparation

1. Have a discussion with handful of co-workers and think of a staff favorite (object, interactive, etc) that is usually overlooked by visitors.
2. Create an observation form to record the ways visitors use / interact (or not) with the chosen object/interactive.
3. Find a clipboard and something to write with.
4. Find a friend (or 2 or 3) to help you collect the data.
5. Find a spot near the object where you can observe visitors.
6. Conduct observations for an hour or so (whatever you can spare)
7. Clean up notes and then comb through data – looking for trends
8. Discuss findings with co-workers
9. Use findings to inform new ways to present/display/interpret object
10. Serve the more audience-centered product to visitors.



## One Object To Go Please!

*"If you could take one thing from the museum home with you – what would it be and why?"*

*This recipe makes for tons of leftovers – so be prepared to sort through all the juicy information that visitors leave behind.*

**Prep: 30 mins Cook: All day Digestion: 1-2 hours**

### Ingredients

1 stack of colorful paper or cardstock (cut to index card sz)  
2+ boxes of markers\*  
1 folding table  
2+ chairs  
2+ sets of instructions  
1+ plastic tray  
1+ staff to monitor  
2+ staff to analyze results

\* Can be substituted with nice pens or colored pencils

### Preparation

1. Find some colored paper, cardstock, or just extra scraps that you have laying around and cut into index size (or in half sheets or 4s)
2. Write the prompt: "If you could take one thing from the museum home with you, what would it be and why?" on the top of cards.
3. Set up a folding table and some chairs in high traffic area.
4. Provide some markers or other nice writing utensils for visitors to write or draw their responses to your prompt.
5. Leave a set of instructions and trays for them to place responses.
6. Check on visitors from time to time and look through responses – remove responses that are "off-topic" but leave thoughtful responses to "prime the pump"
7. Collect data at end of the day and sort through. Look for trends.
8. Discover which things in your museum visitors value and why.
9. Store information in your mind for future planning!



## Recipe Exchange?

**“If you had to make a recipe for having a good time in a museum, what key ingredients would need to be there?”**

*This recipe is best paired with friendly and light-hearted conversation among friends.*

**Prep: 15 mins Cook: 1-2 hrs Digestion: 1-2 hours**

### **Ingredients**

2+ data collectors  
2+ notebooks  
2+ writing utensils  
25-30 visitors

### **Preparation**

1. Get a group of colleagues together and plan a time to head out on the floor and talk with visitors.
2. Work in pairs or alone (if comfortable). If working in pairs – one person asks the question, and the other writes it down.
3. Find a visitor or a group of visitors and ask them if they have a minute or so to have a conversation with you.
4. Get the conversation started by asking the prompt above. Follow up with additional questions, such as “what key ingredient would definitely spoil your recipe for a good time?”
5. Once you and your colleagues have talked to 25-30 people (combined), get together to discuss the data.
6. Look through the interview notes. Notice trends and patterns.
7. Discuss trends and patterns and what those findings might mean.
8. Serve your findings to other colleagues