

Event Evaluation

Instructor's Manual

13: Evaluation in Different Types of Planned Events

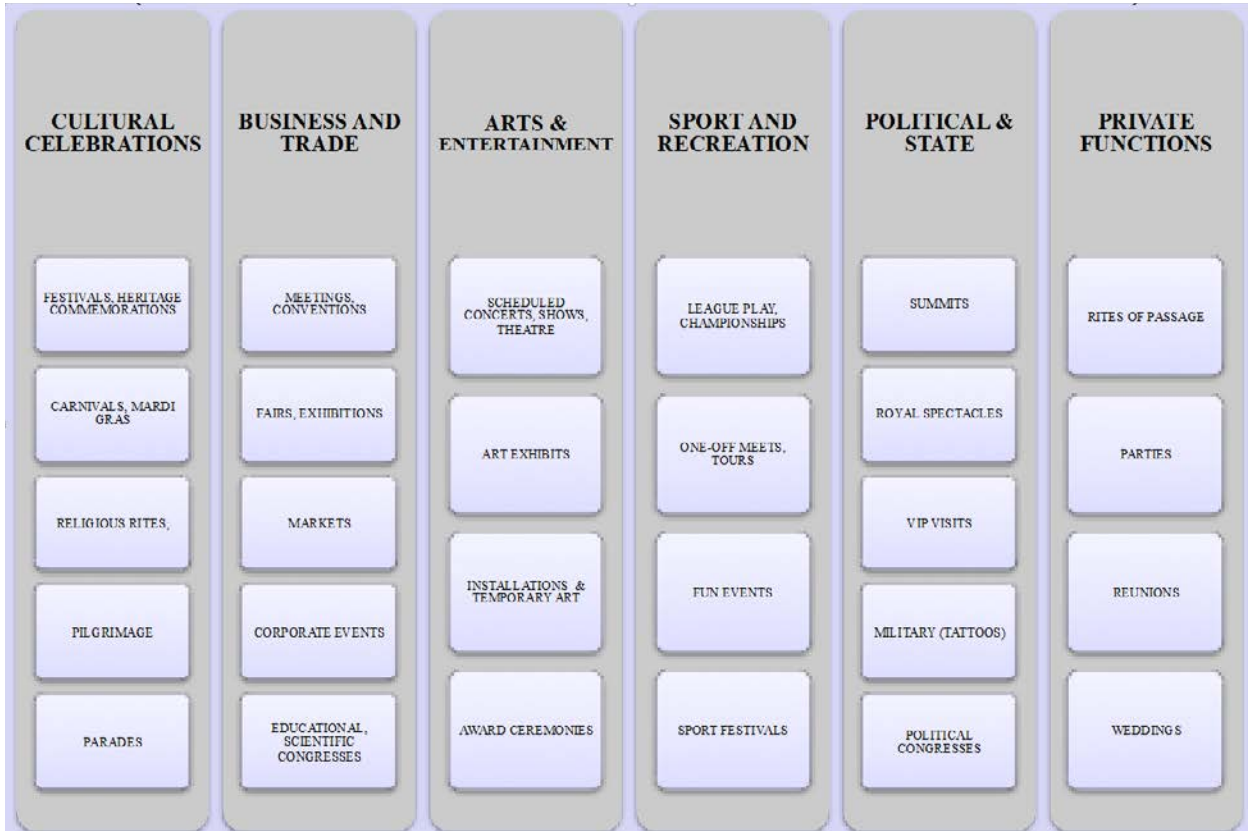
This is the instructor's manual produced to accompany the book *Event Evaluation: Theory and Methods for Events and Tourism*, by Donald Getz, 2018, published by Goodfellow Publishers Ltd.

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Lecture 25

13.1 Introduction (p.147)

There is no particular logic to the sequence, and instructors might want to give extra attention to one or more of the categories. I discuss business events, festivals and cultural celebrations, and sports, but the diagram below is a fuller typology. There are many other typologies possible, depending on what they are to be used for.



Planned event typology: By form as social constructs

13.2 Business events (p.147)

I include private functions here (a key business sector for hotels and other venues), and feature meetings/conventions, charity events, and exhibitions, each with peculiar evaluation challenges. Like sports, many business events come with specifications, so students might want to get into the APEX Event Specifications Guide Template (www.convention-industry.org) as their start point for evaluation. Checklists are the norm in these settings.

Return on Investment, Objectives and Experiences (ROI, ROO and ROE) (p.149) have to be discussed in several places, and related back to the Kirkpatrick model in particular. The whole book focuses attention on ROI and ROO (I prefer "return on goals", however), but ROE is a real challenge. Students might be able to innovate in ways to measure "return on experience".

Evaluation by attendees at conferences is the norm, but in my experience it is often poorly designed and administered, yielding limited information - especially about impacts after the event. The Research Note on p. 151 looks at future intentions: Severt, D., Wang, Y., Chen, P-J & Breiter, D. (2007).

Similarly, the Breiter and Millman note (p.154) considers satisfaction and future intentions of exhibitors.

On p. 155 is a research note by Wood, E. (2009b) pertaining to so-called “experiential marketing”, a sub-set of corporate events. Also check out the website for Sponsormap and discuss how they measure effectiveness. There is a very large body of literature on sponsorship that can be consulted.

Exercise:

Discuss the feedback evaluators want from attendees at business events, participants in sport events (i.e., the amateur athletes) and performers in arts festivals. Each of these needs its own evaluation goals, KPIs and questions. What methods of data collection will work best in each case? Other applications can also be discussed.

Lecture 26

13.3 Festivals and cultural celebrations; the arts (p. 156)

While many evaluation challenges and methods are common to all events, or within the festivals sector, there are special challenges for the arts - including judging artistic merit. The discussion considers rational systems of expert judgment. Section 13.3 also looks at ethnic and multicultural celebrations and the entertainment business.

Exercise:

Judging is a very challenging form of evaluation. Discuss how expert and customer judging can be made credible and transparent for different types of event, such as: artistic performance; cooking at a food event; beverage quality at an alcoholic beverage event; a beauty contest; amateur talent show. Each of these situations needs a system and criteria. Are there any ethical issues raised?

13.4 Sport events (p.160)

Spectator and participant sports are considered separately. The Research Note by Getz, D., & McConnell, A. (2014) on p.161 identifies two research themes pertaining to amateur athletes - their personal portfolios of events and sports they attend, and the development of involvement and event-tourism careers. This is another example of how understanding motivations, and theory from leisure and sociology, can help event designers and evaluators.

The diagram below includes major changes in motivation, the events attended, travel style and evolutionary considerations for the travel career trajectory. There is a growing body of literature on this "theory in development" but for evaluators it presents a challenge: at what stage are participants at? Does the event cater to the highly involved or beginners?



Hypothetical event travel career trajectory for amateur distance runners

Questions

Q: Define ROI, ROO and ROE in the context of the Kirkpatrick model. Explain each level of the model. An illustration will help.

A: Draw the diagram and explain each level. A concise description of ROI, ROO and ROE will be needed, plus ideas on how to measure them (i.e., methods and KPIs).

Q: What are special evaluation issues and challenges regarding festivals and cultural celebrations? Include the problem of accounting for different cultural value perspectives.

A: Consider: the challenges of open festivals (no gate) and how to systematically reach people; the meaning of cultural authenticity and how that can be evaluated; cross-cultural interpretations of meaning and possible conflicts. The answer should refer to one or more value perspectives and include the idea that many cultural productions are valued intrinsically.

Q: Describe challenges and methods for judging artistic quality, food/beverage quality, and athletic performance.

A: Other applications of judging could be mentioned. The system and criteria will be different for each, but often it's a matter of deviation from specifications or confirmation

Of aptitude/skill or other criteria that comes with expert judges. For customer or "peoples' choice" type awards, as commonly found in food and beverage contests, there has to be a fair and transparent system of voting so that accusations of bias cannot be levied.

Q: Explain the motivational and behavioural differences between sport participants and spectators, and what this means for evaluation

A: The evaluator has to account for involvement and a travel career as it relates to participation, Common motivation is personal development, health and fitness, and social-world identity. For spectators it is more about being a fan (identification with a team), socializing and nostalgia. Similar methods can be used, like surveys and participant observation, but quite different questions apply.

Essay-Style

Q: Suggest a simple and effective method (including Key Evaluation Questions) for evaluating the motives, decision criteria, expectations, and satisfaction level of attendees at business events - a method that includes pre, during and post-event experiences.

A: The challenge here is to come up with a three-part evaluation. Possibilities include:

A paid or volunteer panel (the kind employed by marketing firms) that agrees to respond to questions or interviews at various times about their interests and plans to attend events, actual experiences and outcomes; online surveys using the registration or mailing lists for events to obtain before, during and after survey responses; retroactive interviews or surveys looking at past experiences. Some key questions are needed to cover each of before, during and after on motivations, experiences and effect.

Q: Discuss this proposition: "Different types of events present their own unique evaluation challenges and therefore professional evaluators have to develop unique methods and measures for each".

Q: Discuss the Kirkpatrick model and how it can be applied to training effectiveness and other interventions related to planned events. HINT: interventions could include social marketing at events, sponsorship, exhibition of goods and services, or political and cultural messages or images.

A: Beyond illustrating and discussing the model in the training context, this answer requires some lateral thinking and imagination. Social marketing and other interventions at events are very common, often combining information with sampling or experiential engagement. So how can their effectiveness be measured? For a commercial sponsor there is a lot of literature on brand recall and sales as measures of effectiveness. Social marketers are more interested in measuring information retention, attitude and ultimately behavioural change.

Q: How can the evaluator of an arts festival or concert draw conclusions about authenticity and/or quality? Work through an example that includes goals, KPIs, methods and measures.

A: A full discussion is needed of authenticity, but if students do not have it in their background then stick to the quality topic as covered in this chapter. A good answer should include details on visitor perceptions of quality (various attributes of the event, both programme and services), benefits expected and obtained, problems and experiential highlights. The use of importance-performance analysis should be mentioned, as well as the five-gaps model in structuring questions. Participant observation and service mapping can be brought into the essay.