

Evaluate Other Events

Observation is often an excellent teacher. To observe events, attend as many different types as you can fit into your schedule. Check the **Upcoming Events** column of your local newspaper to find out about public events such as fairs and festivals. Contact your Chamber of Commerce to find out about business events. Say “**yes**” to invitations to weddings, parties, and other social events – even ones you wouldn’t normally attend.

TIP: To avoid paying a fee to attend costly events, contact the organizer and volunteer to help out. This will give you an inside view of the event.

When you attend the event, make note of your observations. For example, when you are registering, notice:

- What is the **process** for registration?
- Are there **line-ups**? (If so, how do attendees appear to **feel** about it? Are they excited to be part of such a popular event? Are they frustrated at waiting?
What do you think would make them feel better about the wait?)
- Does the registration staff appear to have everything **under control**?
- Are you made to feel **welcome**?
- How could the registration process be **improved**? (E.g. more staff, fewer forms to fill out, signs clearly telling people where to go, etc.)

To assist you in your research, consider getting a 5x7 wire bound notebook to take to events. Note the date and the event at the top of the first page, along with your other observations. Alternatively, you might prepare a sample evaluation form (see section

TIP: Be discreet when taking notes. It’s not a good idea to whip out a notebook at a family dinner party and start writing a critique of the food. (You can expect people to be curious about what you are doing!)

Ask Others for Evaluations

Almost everyone attends events of some kind – music festivals, book signings,

business conferences, tradeshows, etc. Finding people to talk to about their **past experiences** should therefore not be too difficult.

Start by canvassing your family, friends and business associates for anecdotal information about past experiences, or ask them to keep a little **journal** for you when they next attend an event. As an alternative, you could create a short event **evaluation form** and ask the person attending to spend a few moments appraising the event.

Other people's opinions can give you insights on how events are seen through the eyes of attendees. You will learn what went wrong, and you may discover what people think is exciting, trendy or new.

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