

Planning an Exhibition

Every type of exhibit starts with a plan. No matter what kind of exhibit you create, you should start by planning what you want the exhibit to look like, what you want it to say, and how you want to say it.

STEP	PLAN	QUESTION TO ANSWER	EXAMPLE: My exhibit is about chairs.	YOUR IDEAS
1	Theme	What is the central idea of the exhibit?	The central idea of my exhibit is that there are many different types of chairs, and each of them has a different purpose.	
2	Artifacts	What artifacts will support the central idea?	I will choose different types of chairs, such as an office chair, a dining room chair, a wheelchair, a folding camp chair and a living room chair.	
3	Storyline	What story do you want the artifacts to tell?	I want people to understand what each type of chair is designed to be used for.	
4	Artifact labels	What will you say about each artifact?	I will describe the type of chair, what it looks like, who made it and when it was made.	
5	Exhibit Text	What other information will you give the visitor about your storyline?	I will tell visitors how important chairs are to our daily lives and how hard it would be if we couldn't sit down. Some people who use wheelchairs would not be able to get around without chairs.	
6	Exhibit Design	What colours, shapes, type (font) and styles will you use?	I will make sure all the artifact chairs I choose are a different shade of green, so they all seem to go together even if they don't really look alike. I will make my exhibit text and artifact labels dark purple letters on a light purple background, because I like green and purple together.	

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7	Layout	What do the cases and text panels look like?	I will have no cases, just the chairs for people to sit in and to try out. The text panels will be on stands beside each chair so people can read about the chair and what it was used for before they sit in it.	
8	Traffic flow	How do you want your visitors to move around your exhibit?	I will put all the chairs in a circle, facing out, like a game of musical chairs. Visitors will walk around the outside of the circle and sit down when they feel like it.	
9	Evaluation	How will you judge whether visitors understand the message?	I will create a comment wall in the exhibit for visitors to write their thoughts on what they liked or did not like about the exhibit. Everyone can read what people write about the exhibit.	

Roles within the Exhibit Team

Every exhibit is put together by a team. Each team member has a specific job to do in order to make the exhibit work.

- **Curator** – decides on the central idea, chooses artifacts, and works with the Educator to write the exhibit text and artifact labels
- **Designer** – designs the cases, text panels and labels
- **Educator** – works with the Curator to write the artifact labels and exhibit text, puts together education programs, hands-on activities, etc.
- **Preparator** – works with the designer to put the exhibit together – puts the artifacts in cases, makes and installs the text panels and labels, puts the cases in the exhibit so that the layout and traffic flow are correct
- **Media Specialist** – prepares press releases, creates advertising material and exhibit brochures, designs web page

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- **Evaluator** – makes sure that all the exhibit elements work together, that the text is clear and correct, and that the visitor understands the central idea