



ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

***PURSUING INTENTIONAL PRACTICE  
IN MUSEUMS***

1. The Museum's Intended Impact
2. Institutional Alignment
3. Intentional Program Planning
4. Collective Inquiry and Assessment

**Randi Korn & Associates, Inc.**

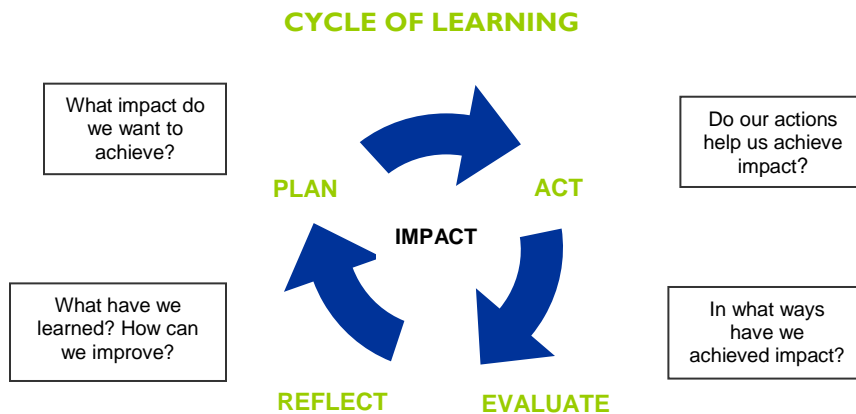
118 East Del Ray Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301 • 703.548.4078  
[www.randikorn.com](http://www.randikorn.com)

# DK&A

## PURSUING INTENTIONAL PRACTICE IN MUSEUMS

Museums are continually being asked to do more with less while providing clear proof of achievement and impact. As a result, leaders must strengthen the museum, as an organization, to respond. Pursuing intentional practice is one solution for a new way of working. To achieve success in this century, we believe museums must be intentional in their practice by continually clarifying their purpose, aligning all practices and resources to achieve their purpose, measuring impact, and learning from practice to strengthen their ongoing planning and actions.

The foundation of our ideas for intentional practice is the cycle of learning, which depicts an ideal work cycle in museums with four interconnected and continual steps that are guided by four related questions.



We have developed a series of four workshops to help museum professionals become more intentional in their practice. These workshops inspire professionals to place the museum's mission and impact at the center of daily work and decision making. They demonstrate ways to align practices and resources with mission and impact that involve doing less to achieve more with actions that yield the greatest results. The workshops also encourage professionals to continually learn from their successes and failures, thus strengthening the museum and its ability to achieve its intended impact.

The purpose of the workshops is to develop stronger organizations while supporting museum professionals as they pursue lifelong learning in their daily work.

# RTK&A

## To What End?

### Workshop 1

#### The Museum's Intended Impact

##### **PURPOSE**

Assist directors and museum staff in clarifying the museum's intended impact. This workshop addresses the question, *To what end* do we carry out our programs and exhibitions?

**WHAT?** The museum's intended impact describes what the museum aspires to achieve and defines the museum's ultimate effect on the public. Inspirationally, intended impact represents the essence of the institution and reflects the deepest passions of its staff. Pragmatically, the museum's intended impact requires staff to focus on results.

**WHY?** In an environment of program proliferation and output-driven practice in which museum attendance often defines success, clarifying the museum's intended impact helps museum leaders prioritize their actions to achieve desired outcomes. A clear statement of intended impact provides a focus for decision making.

**HOW?** Clarifying the museum's intended impact requires professionals to identify and articulate the relevant, desirable results that the museum seeks to achieve over a period of time. It involves responding to the question, *To what end* do we carry out our programs and exhibitions? While the museum's mission is the starting point, the process may result in rediscovering the museum's purpose or redefining its mission.

##### **GOALS**

- Define the purpose, value, and process of clarifying the museum's intended impact
- Address the question, *To what end* do we carry out our work?
- Link personal connections and individual passions among professionals to the museum's mission
- Clarify and define the museum's intended impact

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## Doing Less to Achieve More

### Workshop 2 Institutional Alignment

#### **PURPOSE**

Train directors and museum staff to align their practices and resources to support the museum's intended impact. This workshop addresses the question, *How can doing less achieve more?*

**WHAT?** Institutional alignment is achieved when museum professionals examine and alter the museum's practices, programs, and resources in the context of its intended impact. When practices and resources are aligned, the museum operates deliberately and with greater efficiency and effectiveness; decisions drive toward a meaningful end. Clarifying the museum's intended impact is a prerequisite to institutional alignment.

**WHY?** Institutional alignment is one strategy for alleviating museums' frenzy to always do more. While it is possible to continually create more and more programs, it is not sustainable. Knowing how to align practices and resources with intended impact is a results-orientated strategy that is sustainable.

**HOW?** Aligning practices and resources with the museum's intended impact requires discipline. Museum leaders must decide what to do and what *not* to do, and thus determine which programs yield the greatest impact. In implementing this difficult, yet important, strategy, museum staff may realize that *doing less* allows them to *achieve more* with actions that deliver the greatest results.

#### **GOALS**

- Define the purpose, value, and process of aligning the museum's practices and resources with its intended impact
- Build a common understanding among professionals of the positive implications of *doing less to achieve more*
- Introduce the value of "taking things off the table"
- Train professionals to use a decision-making methodology for determining which programs support the museum's intended impact

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## *Plan with the End in Mind*

### Workshop 3 Intentional Program Planning

#### **PURPOSE**

Train directors and museum staff to develop program goals and objectives that achieve the museum's intended impact. This workshop addresses the question, How can we *plan with the end in mind*?

**WHAT?** Intentional program planning is purpose-driven. It starts with the museum's intended impact. Professionals clarify what they want to achieve programmatically to advance the museum's mission. Intentional program planning also highlights the link between planning and evaluation, so that goals and objectives guide program planning and frame evaluation.

**WHY?** In an era of limited resources and heightened accountability, museums must deliberately plan their programs to achieve outcomes that support the museum's intended impact.

**HOW?** Sound program planning requires clarity of thinking. Professionals must recognize the value of *planning with the end in mind*. They must craft program goals and objectives that guide activities toward achieving intended outcomes. Program goals and objectives must also align actions with the museum's intended impact.

#### **GOALS**

- Define the purpose, value, and process of developing program goals and objectives to achieve intended outcomes
- Clarify the distinction between program objectives and visitor experience outcomes
- Demonstrate the relationship between planning and evaluation in developing program objectives and articulating intended outcomes
- Train professionals to develop program goals and objectives that achieve outcomes and frame evaluation

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## Take Time to Reflect

Workshop 4  
Collective Inquiry and Assessment

### **PURPOSE**

Train directors and museum staff to integrate collective inquiry and assessment into their museum practice. This workshop addresses the question, How can *taking time to reflect* improve practice and help the museum achieve its intended impact?

**WHAT?** Collective inquiry and assessment involve periodically reviewing and analyzing staff's work, including programs, exhibitions, and procedures, in the context of the museum's intended impact. The process requires reflection, or learning through experiences. It also supports purposeful learning among museum staff—as individuals and as teams—and advances organizational learning.

**WHY?** Collective inquiry and assessment constitute one way for practitioners to learn what worked, what did not, and why. Learning through practice is necessary to continually improve and use resources effectively. Most important, reflection builds a shared understanding among staff around the museum's intended impact.

**HOW?** Collective inquiry and assessment require discipline, a commitment to integrating periodic assessment into regular routines and processes, and an open environment that invites questioning. Above all, museum practitioners must learn to *take time to reflect*.

### **GOALS**

- Define the purpose, value, and process of collective inquiry and assessment in museum practice
- Introduce reflection techniques that are realistic and meaningful
- Train professionals in how to continually learn from programmatic success and failure
- Collectively identify ways to integrate collective inquiry and assessment into the museum's practice, departmentally and organizationally

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## **THE WORKSHOP PROCESS**

In most cases, we recommend inviting a diverse group of museum leaders and staff members from across the museum to participate in the workshops. Participants may include board members, directors, senior staff, and other museum professionals. From our experience, this approach maximizes professional *and* organizational development. The workshops may also be tailored to benefit a single museum department.

Each workshop is customized to meet the museum's concerns and needs to maximize its value and benefit. Preparatory work includes an extensive planning discussion. Following the workshop, a debriefing discussion informs the development of a summary report and of a list of additional resources that can help the museum integrate workshop outcomes into its planning and new processes into its practice.

The workshops are available independently or as a series. Workshop 1 (The Museum's Intended Impact) is a prerequisite, however, for Workshop 2 (Institutional Alignment).

## **FORMAT AND LOGISTICS**

Each workshop includes a combination of presentations, facilitated discussions, and small and large group exercises. Up to 25 participants can be accommodated. The duration of most workshops is one day.

## **DELIVERABLES**

- Planning meeting by teleconference with the project team to discuss key elements in planning and preparing for the workshop
- Debriefing discussion after the workshop
- Summary learning report developed in PowerPoint for communicating among all staff and/or other stakeholders
- List of related resources for further learning



**RANDI KORN & ASSOCIATES, INC.**

Randi Korn & Associates, Inc. (RK&A) is a full-service museum evaluation and research firm dedicated to guiding museum practitioners in improving practice and assisting museums in achieving their intended impact. During the past two decades, we have learned from the hundreds of evaluations we have conducted for museums of all types and sizes. We have worked with children’s museums; museums of science, art, and history; and botanical gardens, zoos, and aquariums. Underscoring our commitment to helping museums pursue intentional practice and evaluate their impact on the public, Randi Korn recently wrote an article published in *Curator: The Museum Journal* that states the case for holistic intentionality.

**WORKSHOP LEADERS**

*Randi Korn* is Founding Director of Randi Korn & Associates, Inc. Prior to founding RK&A in 1989, Randi held a variety of positions in museums, including executive director, exhibition designer, interpretive planner, and evaluator. She brings to her work a thorough knowledge of how museums function organizationally. She especially enjoys sharing experience and enthusiasm for evaluation and intentional practice.

*ACE Everett* is Managing Director at RK&A. ACE brings a unique skill-set to the firm, drawing on her master’s degree in business administration and her focused experience in nonprofit management consulting in the cultural community. Her professional interests are developing efficient, mission-driven solutions for museums and cultural organizations by turning sound nonprofit management theory into practice.

**CONTACT US**

For more information or to schedule a workshop, please contact us directly by phone or e-mail. A copy of Randi’s article “The Case for Holistic Intentionality” is available upon request or through our Web site.

Randi Korn & Associates, Inc.  
118 East Del Ray Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301  
phone 703.548.4078  
fax 703.548.4306  
www.randikorn.com  
korn@ randikorn.com  
ace@ randikorn.com