

RESORT IMPRESSIONS MANUAL

*Guidelines for using the First Impressions Program for
the Tourism Industry*



Adapted from Andy Lewis's First Impressions Program by:

**Beverly Stencel, Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin Extension
John Preissing, Associate Professor, University of Wisconsin Extension**

GUIDELINES

Purpose:

To help a tourism destination learn about existing strengths and weaknesses as seen through the eyes of the first time visitor.

Your Group:

Ideally 1-3 people should comprise a team for the visit, 2 is optimal. Try for diversity if possible. Work for a mix of men/women, families, seniors.

Remember...there are no “experts”. Each person’s opinion is valid and important. You may want to get together a day in advance to review the manual, ask questions, plan your route, etc.

Burnett County groups will target the following areas:

- 1) Long Lake/Birchwood
- 2) Spooner/Trego
- 3) Minong

Washburn County groups will target the following areas:

- 1) Yellow Lake
- 2) Clam Lakes
- 3) Eastern Burnett County
- 4) Western Burnett County

Tips:

1. Take one pocket notepad per group (writing in the manual is too conspicuous).
2. Take notes...take notes...take notes or it will all turn into mush!
3. Ask for directions to local attractions, places to eat, things to do, etc.
4. Ask for information on special events in the area (when, where, etc.).
5. Look for positives as well as problems... what’s being done right is important too.
6. Remember, two people may see the same thing and react differently - that’s OK.
7. Have Fun!

The Report:

Use the manual to write up your report the same day of your visit. Use descriptive sentences and give examples and suggestions. “Yes” or “No” answers are not very helpful.

AS YOU APPROACH THE DESTINATION.....

I. What was my perception before visiting? What did I expect?

II. The “five minute” impression:

Take one drive past or through the destination without stopping. Write down what you felt about the destination with only this quick look. Do this in silence, don't talk with the others in your group for this part.

III. Walking around.....comments on facilities (physical part):

a. Overall Appearance

Walking around.....comments on facilities (physical part)(cont.):

b. Signage

c. Parking

d. Restrooms

e. Docks, lakefront

f. Cabin/cottages/campsites

g. Recreation area (pool, courts, swings, etc.)

h. Bar/restaurant

I. Other

IV. Walking around....comments on people (staff, guests):

Were they friendly, did they know answers to questions (ex. "What is there to do around here?"), did they try to help, appearance, etc.

V. Destination information: comments on.....

a. destination brochure

b. area information (maps, calendars of events, attraction brochures)

c. other

VI. WRAP UP

A. Using your “senses”

1. What does the destination **Smell** like?

2. What **Sounds** did you hear?

3. What did the destination **Feel** like (emotional response, i.e. cold/warm, crowded/deserted, inviting, etc. or physical response, i.e. rough roads, etc.)

B. List the **5 most positive** things you observed about the destination:

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

C. Describe **one** idea that intrigued you and you would use in your own business/community/tourism group.

D. What **one** thing was missing or would you recommend?

E. What will you remember most about the destination six months from now:

F. Other comments (that just didn't seem to fit anywhere else!)
