



Submission for Certification Review – Log Entry Form

Informal Visitor Contacts SAMPLE LOG ENTRY—IN-DEPTH

The on-line course in Informal Visitor Contacts is highly recommended as a prerequisite before attempting to submit for certification review. Go to www.parktraining.org to register for the course.

Your log should include at least four (4) entries -- one basic information/orientation contact (1), one in-depth information/orientation contact (1), and two interpretive contacts (2) -- using the form below. You may include up to two additional contacts of your choice (for a maximum of six entries). See the submission guidelines for clarification at <http://www.nps.gov/idp/interp/102/submit.htm>.

****This August, 2007 version of the log entry form supercedes all earlier versions.****

Visitor Contact Log Entry #: 2

Park or site name: *Grand Canyon*

Location/Setting of the contact: *Visitor Center information desk, very busy summer afternoon*

Audience: *Irate older man*

This entry describes and analyzes a contact in which the visitor was provided with:

- ☐ basic orientation/information only
☒ in-depth orientation/information (**SAMPLE**)
☐ interpretation

Part I – Describe the contact

Provide a detailed *narrative description of the dialogue and progression* of the contact, from how it was initiated to how it was concluded. (Include verbal and non-verbal visitor responses, visual cues, and indicate any resource/safety concerns, special circumstances, or park goals if applicable.)

This contact was initiated when the man came up to the information desk and stated angrily and loudly, "This is ridiculous! Do you realize I just spent an hour driving around looking for a place to park? Why don't you have more parking for this visitor center? How do you expect people to get here? There are people driving all over the place and cars parked up and down the street! I guess you don't want us to visit!" His voice was really loud, his face was red and his fists were clenched. I listened to determine if his complaint was valid, and nodded my head and made eye contact with him. Then I said, "I understand. It's very difficult to find parking around here in the middle of the day in the summertime, and it can be very frustrating. Parking is tight these days because visitation has been increasing, and yet we are trying to avoid paving over the forest indefinitely, especially since we are mandated to preserve the natural resources while providing for visitor enjoyment. We are working on a solution that includes a big parking lot outside the park and mass transit to bring people in, but it isn't in place yet, unfortunately. He said, "Well, it's a real pain for those of us who are here today, isn't it?" I said, "Yes, you're right. But there is

a whole process we have to go through to make sure we fulfill our mandate and the parking plan is a part of huge project.” He gradually calmed down (took a deep breath, relaxed his shoulders, and let the blood flow back out of his face). He said, “I’m sorry I yelled at you. It’s just that my family and I want to get out and see the park, and now we’ve wasted all this time.” I said, “I understand. If you’d like, you can fill out a comment form that will be read by management.” He said, “No, that’s not necessary” and began to back away from the desk. I assured him that parking spaces are being vacated all the time, and if he went to one of the big lettered parking lots down in the village there would likely be spaces available. He said OK.

I asked if I could help him with anything else, like information on viewpoints, trails or facilities. He started to step back to the desk and said, “Well as long as I’m here, we were hoping to see the California condors – we read an article in the newspaper about them. Where is the best place to try to see them?” I explained that some of the best viewing was, surprisingly, right along the rim trail in the village, often at the viewpoint by the El Tovar Hotel. I said that they often land along the rock ledges just over the rim and could be easily seen even without binoculars, almost as if they enjoyed having people watch them. He said he thought they were scarce and endangered and was glad to hear that his family had a good chance to see them. I offered him a park newspaper and pointed out the article on condors. He said “Oh, thanks. Well, I see you have other customers – thanks for the information – and for letting me vent.” I said I hoped he would enjoy his visit and he walked away.

Part II – Analyze the contact

Analyze your decision path by answering the following questions:

A. Initial needs:

1. How would you characterize the visitors’ initial needs?

(e.g. they needed help finding their way, they wanted to satisfy a curiosity, they wanted to get some exercise, they wanted to have fun, they had physical needs such as hunger or thirst, they needed help planning their visit, they had a complaint or a concern, they wanted to talk or share, they wanted to find meaning or understanding, etc.)?

His immediate needs were to express his frustration and to be treated with respect by being heard, and to get satisfaction. He wanted to lodge a complaint, and he wanted information on why there was such a shortage of parking.

2. What cue(s) from the visitor provided evidence of their need(s) -- what specific action, non-verbal signal, question, comment, etc.?

He had a red face, a furrowed brow, a frown, a loud voice, clenched fists, and a rigid stance. He barked a direct question, demanding to know why we didn’t build more parking lots.

3. Were there resource protection, visitor safety, or other regulatory park needs that you also needed to address?

No.

4. How did you attempt to provide for the initial visitor needs? How did you also attempt to provide for park regulatory needs, if applicable?

I actively listened, and after he was done, I expressed my sympathy with his frustration. I acknowledged the problem and explained why parking was so limited. I offered an alternative parking area to try and help him enjoy what was left of his day.

5. How did the visitors' response indicate that you did/did not meet their initial needs?

His relaxation, as evidenced by his face returning to its normal color, his breathing calming, his fists unclenching, and his posture relaxing, seemed to indicate that I met his initial need for someone to listen. However, his comment that it was a real pain for visitors still indicated that he had not gotten satisfaction that his concerns would be addressed or that we were apologetic enough to restore his self respect.

B. Continuing the contact:

1. If you did not continue the contact beyond basic information/orientation, why? What visitor cues or other circumstances indicated that this was appropriate?
(End entry here for basic info or orientation contacts)

- OR -

2. If you continued the contact by providing more in-depth information or orientation, what visitor cues indicated that it was appropriate to do so? How did you proceed? When and how did you conclude the contact and why (based on what visitor cues or other circumstances)? (End entry here for in-depth information or orientation contacts)

Since he still seemed annoyed, I again agreed with his assessment of the situation but explained again that we had a mandate to consider, and that it wasn't our intent to discourage our visitors. After he apologized, I offered him a comment form to be sure he understood his options. I then offered more information on the location of other parking areas, and asked if I could provide any other information. At that point he seemed to remember that he did have another question – to find out about the possibilities of viewing condors. He seemed quite surprised to hear that the condors could be easily seen, thinking that they were scarce. Although this was a possible opening to move into an interpretive explanation of the success of the reintroduction program and the survival of condors, there were other visitors who had been waiting patiently in line to get information. I offered the man a park newspaper and pointed out the article on condors. He seemed to be ready to go and was aware of the other visitors waiting behind him. He said "Oh, thanks. Well, I see you have other customers – thanks for the information – and for letting me vent." I said I hoped he would enjoy his visit and he walked away.

I was glad to be able to provide some additional information beyond the parking problem – hopefully his experience once he got out to the canyon rim to watch for condors would help him feel that the difficulty of parking was worth the effort.